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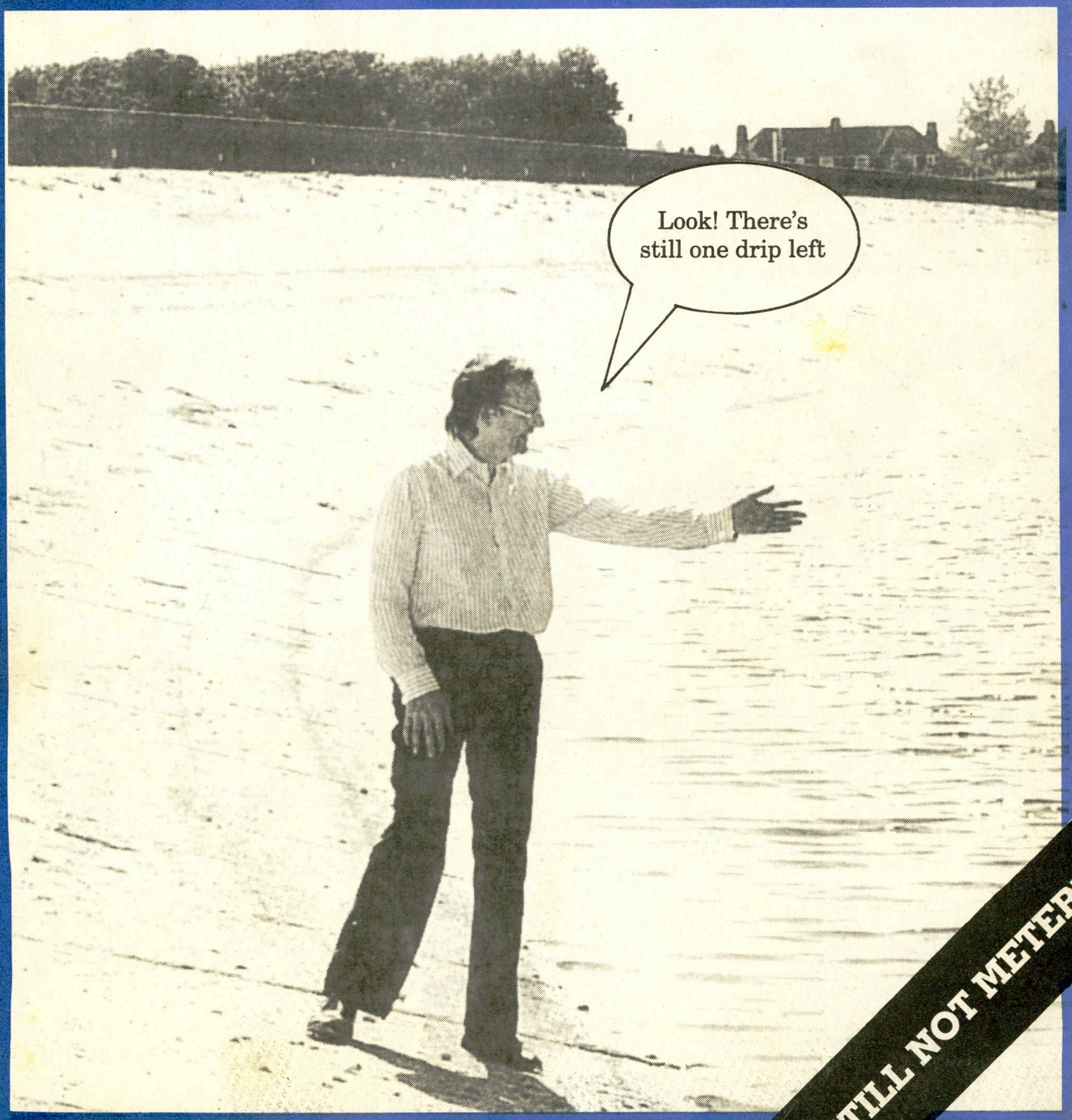

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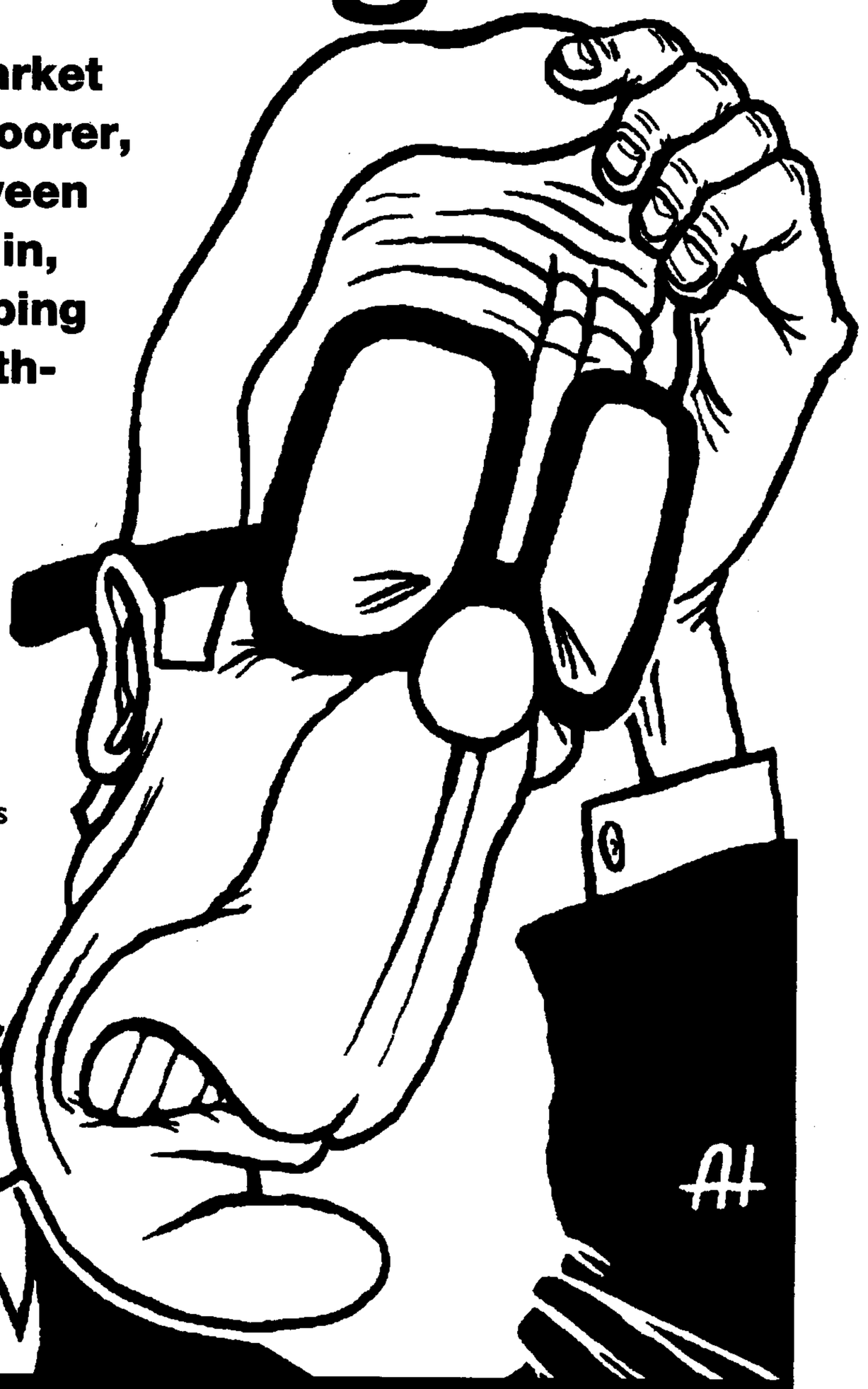

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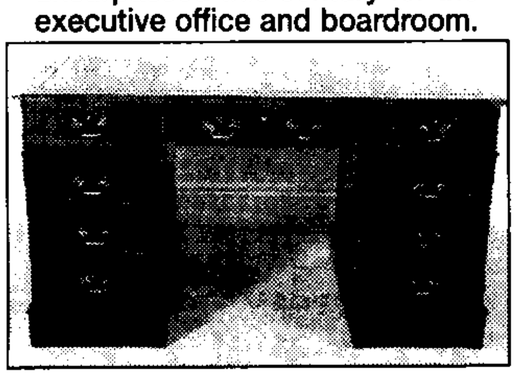

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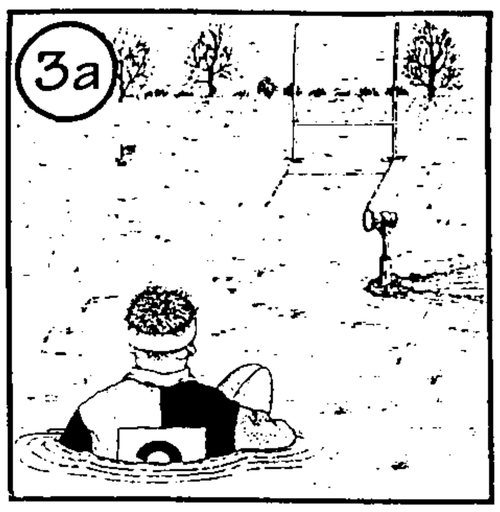

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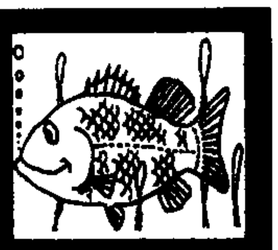

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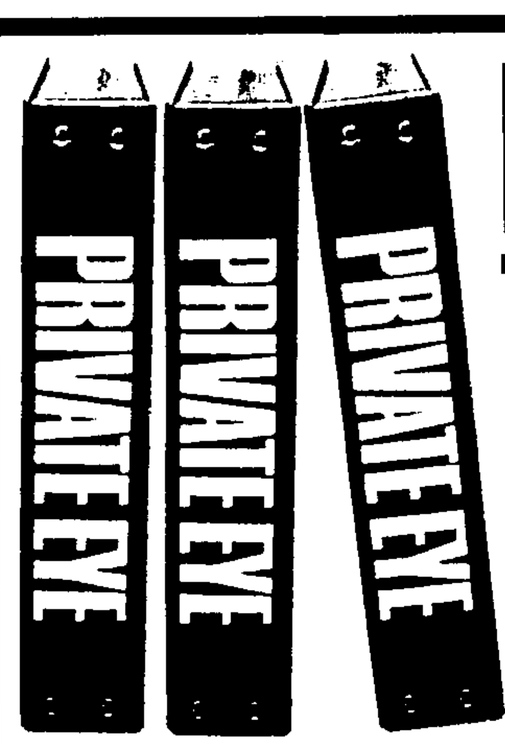

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Gnome

There was an unfortunate incident last week when a schoolboy's essay entitled "Why I Hate Blur" was accidentally printed in the *Evening Gnome* under the heading "Why I Hate Blair" with the byline 'John Prescott'.

This was merely an accident of the type that could have happened any day in the offices of any one of our great national newspapers. However, let me make it clear that those responsible for the error have all been treated with the utmost severity and have been promoted on the spot.

Rest assured that this was a unique incident, a one-off which wil never, ever be repeated.

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On Other Pages:

New Clue In Wimbledon Murder Hunt — "It's probably someone in the Labour Party," say witnesses. 3
New Zealand Man Interviewed Over Murder — Police to arrest Bryan Gould. 5
"I am the murderer," admits Blair in new blow to Labour. 7

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COLOUR SECTION

WILL heads roll at the London *Evening Standard* following the "Gouldgate" fiasco? Senior executives at Associated Newspapers, determined someone should be punished for the shame and embarrassment the affair has brought upon the company, are putting pressure on editor Stewart Steven to find a scapegoat for slaughtering.

The obvious candidate is features executive James Hanning, who commissioned the piece from Bryan Gould. When the article had arrived — or, rather, the article by Nick Howard which appeared under Gould's name — Hanning rang Gould to congratulate him.

The opening sentences of the piece were decidedly odd: "I was three and a half during the Winter of Discontent. I never watched Michael Foot give a speech on television, and have no memory of the 1983 election campaign." Bosses at Associated Newspapers find it incredible that Hanning didn't ask the former Labour MP why he had chosen the curious device of pretending to be a first-time voter.

But Hanning may not be an easy man to sack. The paper's associate editor, Sarah Sands, told Stewart Steven last week that if Hanning went she would resign forthwith in protest. Besides, he can reasonably claim that there are several people who are least as guilty as he is.

One is the naughty Sands herself. For it was she who found the Howard piece and, assuming it must be from Gould, sent it off to be typeset.

Another is boyish features editor Alex Renton — himself the son of a former Tory chief whip. When the cock-up was first discovered, he strolled about the office with a rather smug look on his face, claiming that he at least was in the clear.

Not so, however. Shortly afterwards, a fax was found on Renton's desk. It turned out to be the genuine Gould article, which had been sitting there — ignored and unloved — for the previous two days. Renton has long hankered to pack in his job and sail round the world; perhaps his wish will at last be granted.

Or, more likely, perhaps not. Steven is currently resisting the demands of his superiors for a scapegoat. In his apology last week he described the mix-up as an "extraordinary mischance". As he later told *UK Press Gazette*: "One can see how easily these things can happen... I really think this is a case for Fleet Street to think, 'There but for the grace of God...' "

He should know. For Steven's long and distinguished career has been punctuated by "extraordinary mischances". In 1972 he came up with a sensational scoop for the *Daily Express*: that Martin Bormann was alive and well and living in Argentina. MARTIN BORMANN FOUND screamed the front-page headline, above a picture of the 72-year-old Nazi. Alas! The man in question turned out to be one Rodolfo Siri, a 54-year-old schoolteacher from Buenos Aires.

In spite of this spectacular blunder, Steven was hired soon afterwards by his old chum David English as assistant editor of the *Daily Mail* — where, in 1977, he produced another great exclusive, revealing that British Leyland kept a secret "slush fund". The story was based on a leaked letter from Lord Ryder, chairman of the National Enterprise Board. Alas again! The letter was a forgery — as the most cursory investigation would have proved — and the *Mail* had to pay Ryder a small fortune in libel damages.

Steven's reputation took such a battering that for some time afterwards he was not allowed to write for the *Mail* under his own name, using instead the pseudonymous byline "Peter Greig". But English, showing commendable loyalty, did at least refuse to fire him. Now that Sir David is chairman of Associated Newspapers, hacks at the *Standard* are praying he will once again exercise the prerogative of mercy. Meanwhile Steven can console himself with the thought that he has been responsible for three of the greatest debacles in modern newspaper history. What other editor can boast such a hat-trick?

ENVIRONMENT secretary John Gummer's photocall in front of Alton Water reservoir may have been lapped up by the press but neighbours in his Suffolk constituency take his water warnings with a large pinch of salt.

They recall the fuss a few years ago when Gummer's large, new pond was filled in the grounds of his house, Winston Grange, near Debenham.

The fact that the then agriculture minister's pond had been paid for by Hillsdown Holdings, an abbatoir firm, caused a furore. But locals are still surprised about the way the pond was filled. They say the speed of the water delivery and lack of fuss from Anglian Water must have meant a special favour from the newly privatised company to the man who was about to be made environment secretary.

They will be watching keenly to make sure Gummer's pond depletes as quickly as everybody else's once a hosepipe ban is enforced — and that there are no attempts to top it up.

NUCLEAR workers fearing a privatisation carve-up have not had long to wait.

Procord, a US-based firm, bought the facilities service of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Agency (UKAEA) earlier this year promising "job satisfaction" and no job cuts at six UK sites.

Now the bosses say at least 100 of the 960 posts will be axed on the spurious grounds that UKAEA orders have not materialised. Procord was established by International Business Machines in 1991 when the IBM chairman was Sir Anthony Cleaver. By an amazing coincidence the current UKAEA chairperson is Sir Anthony Cleaver.

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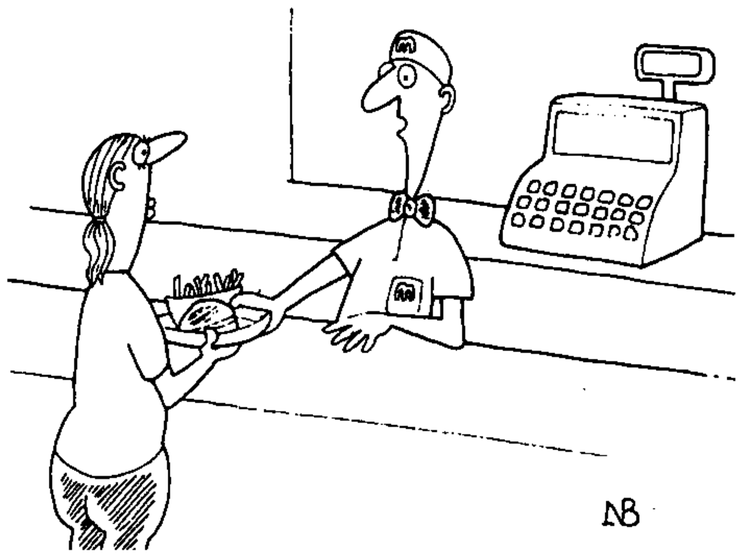


"I got into McDonald's through the clearing system"

"Let's hope we don't run out of water shortages"

Street of Shame

GORMLESS Piers Morgan was thrilled with his scoop about Will Carling and Princess Di, which he bought off-the-peg from Max Clifford for £50,000. So thrilled, indeed, he ran another five pages on the subject a week later, embellished with copious quotations from love-letters Carling sent to a girlfriend four years ago.

The follow-up, however, included this sentence: "Asked for a comment last night, Carling's agent Jon Holmes described the *News of the World* as 'odious, unpleasant, nasty, offensive and disgusting'."

Er, not quite. These epithets were, in fact, applied to Morgan himself. Holmes' exact words to the gormless editor were: "Piers, you are the most odious, unpleasant, nasty, offensive and disgusting person in Fleet Street. I wish you an early death."

Morgan's glee may be shortlived. As a keen cricket fan he had been hoping to organise an end-of-season social get-together with some of his cricketing heroes such as Mike Atherton, Dominic Cork, John Crawley and David Gower. Alas, this now seems unlikely: all the above sportsmen are represented by none other than Jon Holmes!

And there may be worse to come. The Dirty Digger, it is widely rumoured, believes Piers has now delighted us enough and may soon invite him to seek alternative employment.

"ONE OF the most abject apologies in the annals of Fleet Street," boomed the *Daily Torygraph* in its front page report about the *Evening Standard*'s cock-up over the Bryan Gould article, which involved a fax being mistaken for another fax.

Evidently the *Torygraph* had forgotten its own badge of distinction in this regard, which appeared in the edition of 23 April 1994. "Our obituary of Lord Cottesloe published yesterday contained very serious errors because wrong material, which did not relate to Lord Cottesloe or his family, was inadvertently incorporated.

"In offering our most sincere apologies to Lady Cottesloe and all members of the family we are particularly mindful of the gross and deeply hurtful mis-statement published yesterday that Lord Cottesloe's daughter and his second wife, who is Lord Cottesloe's surviving widow, both died from gunshot wounds sustained in accidents in the gunroom of Meiklour House. We are well aware, and are most contrite in acknowledging, that no such accidents ever occurred, that Lord Cottesloe did not have a daughter named Caroline, nor did he have an estate in Perthshire or Wiltshire, and that Lady Cottesloe, Lord Cottesloe's second wife, has in fact survived him..."

KATE THORNTON is a micro-skirted blonde ex-secretary who was recently appointed as the showbiz correspondent of the *Daily Mirror*. She is also the personal protegée of the paper's barmy deputy editor, Brendan "Chucky" Parsons. So far, alas, she is another of Chucky's cock-ups.

Her new career began with a story dubbed "World Exclusive" announcing that Paula Yates had had two ribs removed to boost her boobs and thereby impress her lover, singing oaf Michael Hutchence.

Yates had indeed had a boob job — but not at the cost of two missing ribs. The story was a hoax, cunningly planted on gullible young Kate by rival hacks from the *Sun* who were irritated by her boasts of how she was being built up as the top showbiz writer in the universe. But thicko Parsons failed to notice anything suspicious and rushed it into the paper. It wasn't until *Sun* hacks alerted the *Mirror* to the hoax, via an anonymous tip-off, that the "world exclusive" disappeared from later editions.

THE *Guardian* of 8 August carried a story by Peter Mandelson's favourite hack, Patrick Wintour, revealing the exciting news that Labour party membership had reached a post-war record of 350,000 — a tribute, he implied, to Tony Blair's immense popularity.

Alas, Wintour allowed his enthusiasm to run away with him. The peak for Labour's post-war membership occurred in 1951 and was over one million individual members (as opposed to those affiliated through trade unions). In the early 1960s it was still around 800,000.

In this context, to announce membership of 350,000 as a triumph is an impressive feat of spin-doctoring. Who could possibly have given Wintour this bum steer?

***DAILY EXPRESS* news editor Ian Walker is getting used to public transport following an unfortunate prang with another car in north London.**

After the crash he tried to leave the scene in a hurry, but witnesses, including some burly Dutchmen, persuaded him to stay. The two women whose car was crumpled by the newsman asked for an address — which Walker quickly scribbled on the back of a card. Later they found the address was not his home address at all, and appeared to have no connection with him. Luckily for them, the hack had written this curious address on the back of his *Daily Depress* business card!

Police breathalysed Walker and he is now banned from driving for 18 months. He could not have hidden the matter from *Express* bosses, however, even if he had wanted to: the J-registered Sierra belonged to the paper.

THE apotheosis of byline-junkie Roy Greenslade continues, courtesy of the *Grauniad*.

Two weeks ago he was given two pages of the paper to complain about how badly the press — and the *Sunday Times* in particular — had reported Northern Ireland.

The *ST*, he noted, "led the way in attacking Thames TV's *This Week* team, which questioned the government's version of the SAS shooting of three IRA members in Gibraltar in 1988. It then played a key role in identifying people who killed two British soldiers at the resulting funeral."

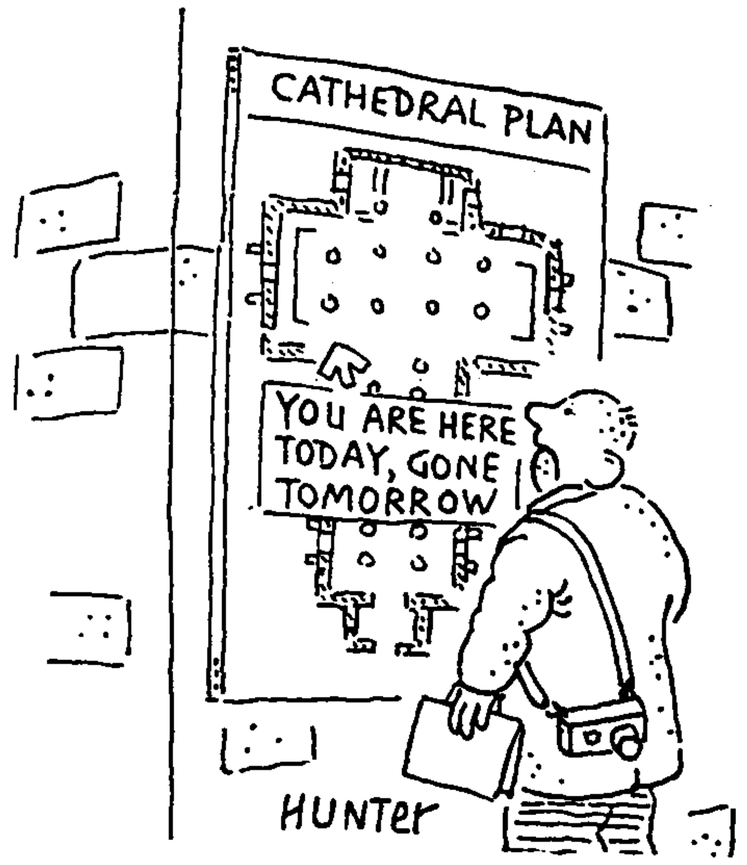
Greenslade should know. Although he omitted to mention it, he was managing editor of the *Sunday Times* between 1987 and 1990. Before that, from 1981 to 1987, he was assistant editor of the *Sun* — whose Northern Ireland coverage has always been renowned for its impartiality.

THE *Daily Express* recently recruited six young and cheap graduates whom editor "Sir" Nicholas Lloyd hopes will keep the paper at the cutting edge of geriatric medicine (*"investigative journalism", shurely?*).

One prospective candidate was asked during his interview with Lloyd about his editorship of a student paper. The old-timer leaned across the desk and said conspiratorially: "So I bet you have lots of attractive young students working for you?" What a good example he sets to hacks of the future.

PROOF that the *Sunday Express* lives in the past with its head a long way up its bottom came last weekend with its piece about Matsuhiro Watanabe, a vile Japanese prison camp "demon".

I'VE NO REGRETS, SAYS THE TORTURER WHO FLED



TO LUXURY shouted the *Depress*'s headline over an article that claimed the monstrous Watanabe "shows no remorse and even tries to justify beating prisoners until they were close to death".

Unfortunately the *Depress* got most of its "information" from an article Watanabe wrote as recently as 40 years ago. The rag might have got away with its shoddy trick if its rival, the *Mail on Sunday*, had not actually sent a hack to find Watanabe. DEATHCAMP MONSTER FINALLY SAYS I'M SORRY, reported the *MoS* accurately over an article recording how he now "professes genuine shame for what he did". It quotes him as saying: "I want to apologise. A deep, deep apology."

MORE difficulties at the *Financial Times* for editor Richard "Safe Hands" Lambert following news editor Julia Murphy's admission that she knows nothing about shares (*Eye* 868).

The problem this time is finding someone to take on the job of industrial editor. It should be easy enough: a prestigious post on a well-regarded paper. But the candidate Lambert has in mind — Max Wilkinson, currently editor of the weekend *FT* — has turned it down, after first saying he would do it. Lambert wants to ease "Blue Max" into the job in order to give the weekend *FT* editorship to la Murphy — on the basis that she can't cause too much trouble in that soft-centred spot.

WITH Quentin Letts off to New York for the *Times*, the *Daily Torygraph* is having trouble finding a suitably dull replacement to edit its Peterbore diary.

One candidate interviewed by Max "Hitler" Hastings and his shark-like deputy Veronica Wadley was the avuncular *Sunday Express* columnist Tom Utley, former editor of the *Sunday Torygraph*'s Mandrake column. Asked whether he enjoyed a drink, Utley said he had put such wayward behaviour behind him.

He was then asked whether he had any decent arts contacts. "Rather," he replied eagerly. "Could you name some of them, please?" they asked. At this his confidence rather evaporated and he was unable to volunteer a single name.

Finally Wadley asked him if he was Roman Catholic. This flummoxed him, since Utley's father, T.E. Utley, who was deputy editor of the *Torygraph* in the early 1980s, was well-known for being a member of the Church of England and a staunch supporter of Ulster unionism. He left feeling somewhat relieved he would almost certainly not be offered the job.

AS the would-be paper for London's wannabe trendsetters, the *Evening Standard* delights in writing stories about the modish yuppy sport of rollerblading.

A recent article screamed "Rider blinded in roller-blade park horror" after a blader frightened a horse in Hyde Park which then threw its rider, blinding her in one eye. Unfortunately next to this horrid tale the *Standard* ran an advert featuring a fearsome rollerblader in mid-flight to promote the cool-as-bedtime-cocoa musical *Starlight Express*.

The Crook, The Spectator, The Hitman & His Ex-Wife (Part 94)

"I BLAME the male sex for the appalling proliferation of single mothers," Boris Johnson thundered in last week's *Spectator*. Something must be found, he argued, to restore women's desire to be married. "That means addressing the feebleness of the modern Briton, his reluctance or inability to take control of his woman and be head of a household."

These moral lectures sound a little odd coming from Johnson, an old friend of the fraudster Darius Guppy, with whom he calmly discussed the arrangements for beating up a fellow-hack who had incurred Guppy's displeasure.

They sound even odder when one learns that Johnson had to arrange a quickie divorce from his first wife, Allegra Mostyn-Owen, after discovering he had impregnated his lover, Marina Wheeler — whom he has since married.

Johnson's belief that a man should take charge in the household scarcely tallies with his own domestic habits. He is notoriously reluctant to pay for anything (he wasn't even prepared to foot the bill for his first honeymoon) and is almost incapable of dealing with income tax, insurance policies and other such tiresome duties that often fall to a "head of the household".

But then consistency has never been Boris's strong point. When he was the *Daily Telegraph*'s Brussels correspondent, he made his name as a scourge of Europe and all its works and duly became a hero of the Little Englanders. But his own background is rather more cosmopolitan — as his full name, Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson, suggests.

His great-grandfather, who was the Turkish foreign minister under the last Sultanate, was lynched by a crowd in Istanbul in the early 1920s for having supported the Treaty of Trianon. His grandfather, Wilfred "Johnny" Johnson, was born in England but began life without a surname, since the Turks didn't go in for such things at the time. It was an official in the register office who proposed "Johnson". Boris's cousins, who still live in Turkey, are mostly called "Kuneralp". Boris himself was born in the United States — where his father worked for the World Bank — and is therefore an American of sorts. Hence he is well equipped to pontificate about foreigners.

The recent revelation of Boris's chats with Guppy on the subject of hitmen and broken bones will not have surprised those who know him well. Like his grandfather Johnny, he has a reputation as a "thumper". He once hit his sister Rachel simply because she couldn't name the lead singer of the Clash. (A rock group, m'lud.) "The modern British male," Johnson concluded in the *Spectator* last week, "is useless." Speak for yourself, matey.

HALLO! THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! TO CHELSEA's exclusive Harbour Club where the Princess of Wales learnt so much about loose ball play and safe rucking during her friendship with English rugby captain, Will "Newly-Wed" Carling.

Feeling thirsty after her own visit to the gym, the Marquesa settles in the bar with the club's in-house magazine. While trying to decide what to drink, her eye falls on a puff for one of the appetising summer drinks on offer. "Sip up the Sun," says the puff. "Savour our choice of mouth-watering cock." Er, the Marquesa opts for a mineral water.

HALLO! THE Marquesa sends her best to Chris Holmes and Odette Nightingale, who amused us so much as two of the participants in the *News of the Screws*'s recent "Sunday School teacher in three-in-a-bed sex romp" story.

Chris has quit his £125,000 a year job as assistant general manager of the National Provident Institution. He decided to leave weeks before he was due to face an internal disciplinary inquiry into his sexual conduct. Odette, a former NPI clerk and Sunday School teacher, also resigned before her disciplinary panel met, preferring to sell her story to the *Screws*.

She claimed she had taken part in three-in-a-bed love romps with Mr Holmes and another man. That other man was of course none other than the intriguingly named Tory MP for Bury St Edmunds, Mr Dick Spring. Not surprisingly the Tory MP has *not* resigned. Good for Springy Dick, says the Marquesa.

HALLO! THE Marquesa is delighted to wield the sword of truth and silence critics of her friend Jonathan Aitken MP once and for all.

Jonathan resigned recently as treasury minister to spend more time with his lawyers (just before a tabloid revealed how he had enjoyed an adulterous sexual relationship with a woman who, unbeknown to him, had a professional interest in SM practices).

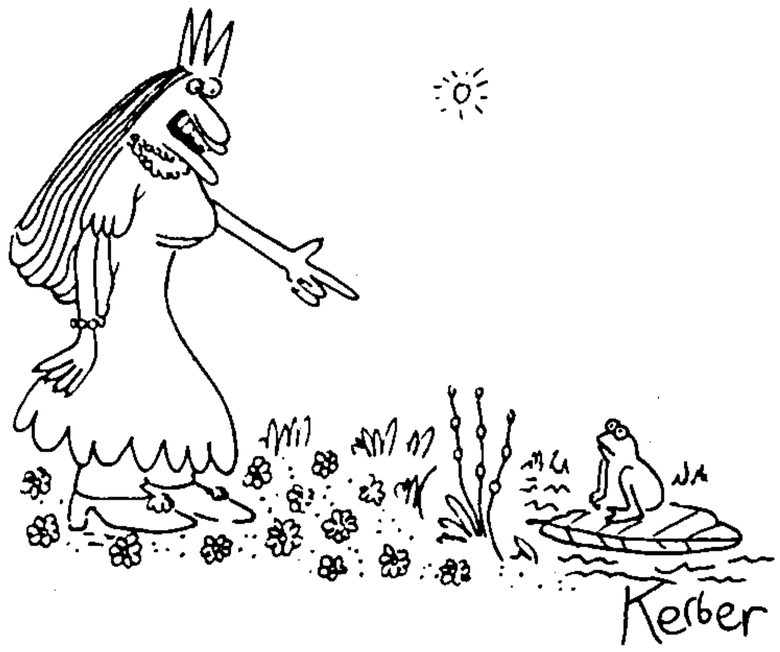
Before that, among other things, there was the unfair sniping over Jonathan's efficacy while on the board of the arms company BMARC. How could anyone as bright as Jonathan not know to which nasty regimes BMARC was selling its deathly cargo, the critics ask.

Happily, an answer arrives comes from his constituency — on the headed notepaper of the Thanet Hard of Hearing Club, no less, which boasts as president the greatly maligned Jonathan Aitken.

HALLO! *IT cannot be long before Mick Jagger receives that much-sought knighthood. For I learn of yet another blow for respectability struck by the former Street Fighting Man who now boasts: "We are a grandfather."*

Mick recently agreed to cooperate with the not very hip Sunset Times which wanted to run a major profile of him. Imagine Mick and Jerry's horror, though, when they discovered that the writer the rag had commissioned was the former grave-digger and heroin addict, the sepulchral Will Self.

Outraged at such lèse-majesté, Mick cancelled the interview. Even though the once hip low-life novelist Self has recently left his wife and children for the delectable Victoria Hull, sister of the Duchess of Somerset, he still isn't grand enough for "Sir" Rubber Lips and the trucker's daughter from Texas, the aristocrats of rock 'n' roll.



"Hey — aren't you the frog formerly known as Prince?"

HALLO! TO the Gielgud Theatre for the first night of Alan Aykbourn's new farce *Communicating Doors*. Once again I find myself sitting behind the late Robert Morley's son, Sheridan.

Last time (*Eye* 876) poor Sherry seemed so tired he spent much of the performance with his head slumped forward. This time the dear boy tries much harder. Seated in Row P seat number 20, the corpulent critic's head keeps drooping all right — but every so often he jerks it up again dramatically!

Again his *Spectator* review (under the apposite title *What's Going On?*) is dismissive: "Too many rabbits, not enough hats," he opines. After the show, however, Sheridan emerges at trendy Joe Allen's restaurant in Covent Garden looking far perkier.

HALLO! VISITING the Harley Street Clinic for a bit of minor cosmetic improvement, the Marquesa hears a patient in a neighbouring room barking out orders in an Australian accent. Peeping through the door, she sees his head is swathed in bandages following what is euphemistically known as a "face-tuck".

A little later, however, the bandages are removed. And what a remarkable job the cosmetic surgeons have done! The man looks the absolute spitting image of Rupert Murdoch.

Perhaps someone should warn dear Rupert about the existence of this impostor.

HALLO! *OVERHEARD in the interval at the opera:*

Unknown brash Australian woman: "That Russian tenor certainly set my juices flowing. Did he do the same for you?"

Rt Hon Edward Heath (for it is he): "I do not come to the opera to get my juices flowing."

'The Marquesa'

THE recent arrest in Scotland on arms charges of prominent loyalist Lindsay Robb may be bad news for the peace process but it has delighted Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists (DUP).

Since the ceasefire Robb, together with Progressive Unionist party colleagues and former UVF hard men Billy Hutchinson (15 years for murder) and David Ervine (seven years for possessing explosives) have not only eclipsed Paisley's political support on the Shankhill Road but, after secret talks with Northern Ireland minister Michael Ancram, they have been judged by the British government to be "men we can do business with".

The DUP believes that Paisley alone should wield the Unionist veto.

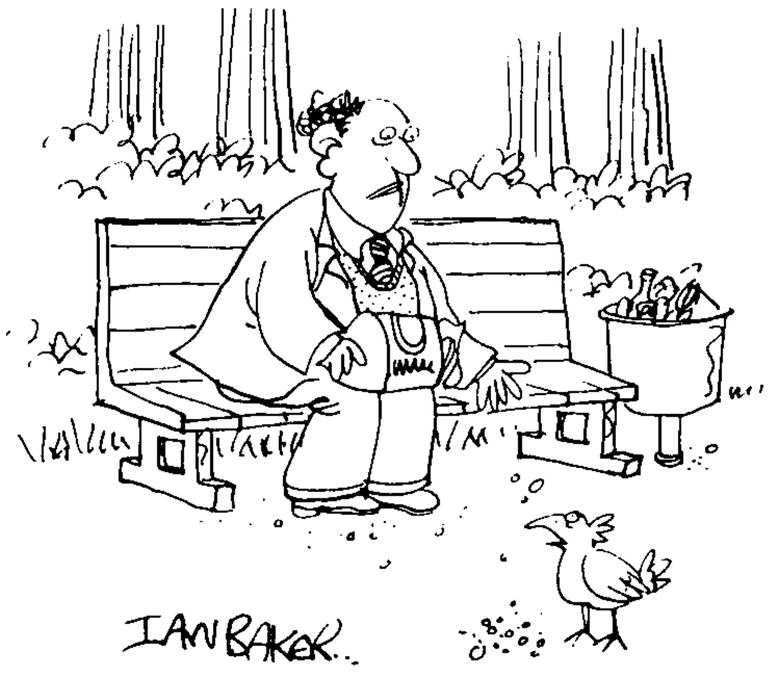
The charges laid in Falkirk sheriff court may also be used to discredit another of Paisley's rivals. The guns Robb was allegedly procuring were said by Scottish police to be destined not for the UVF, as might be expected given Robb's PUP associations, but for another loyalist paramilitary group, the Ulster Freedom Fighters.

The UFF normally finds its political expression through the Lisburn-based Ulster Democratic party. The UDP is led by a 26-year-old former computer programmer, Gary McMichael, who recently made a trip to Washington to meet Bill Clinton. The sharp-suited McMichael likes to model himself on Tony Blair and can barely get through a sentence without using the word "modern".

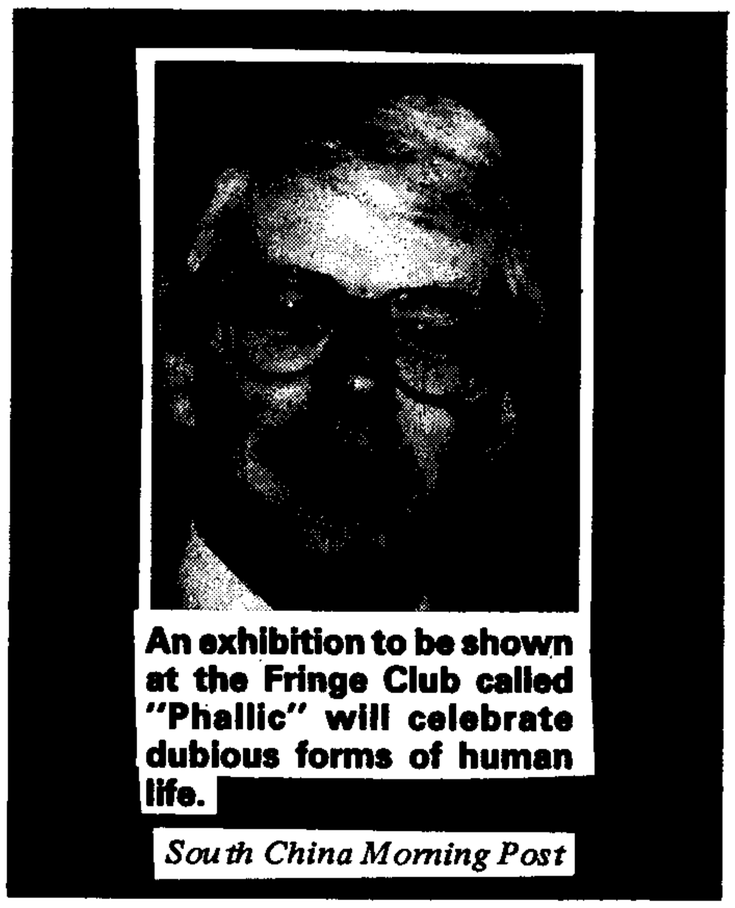
Paisley's pose of holding his nose in the presence of grassroots politicians with strong paramilitary connections may play well in the mainland media but it is less effective in Northern Ireland where political memories are longer. In Belfast many fondly recall Paisley and DUP crony Peter Robinson being somewhat embarrassed by a paramilitary group called Ulster Resistance. UR never caught on in the loyalist ghettoes of Belfast and Londonderry, but it recruited a healthy number in Fermanagh and Armagh. Before long UR men took part in a bank robbery in Portadown and three of its members were arrested by French police in 1989 having been caught in some shady business with a South African diplomat and an arms dealer. Two of them were regular attenders at Paisley's Free Presbyterian Church. Paisley, of course, was vigorous in denouncing illegality on the part of these tearaways who had clearly run out of control.

One of the most heartening pictures of recent days was the sight of John Hume emerging from constructive talks with Parsley and Molyneux.

Grauniad



"Are you saying I can't provide for my kids?"



An exhibition to be shown at the Fringe Club called "Phallic" will celebrate dubious forms of human life.

South China Morning Post

DR Brian Mawhinney's elevation to the chairmanship of the Tory party has resulted in total sense of humour failure at central office — and another body being added to the unemployment figures.

The body is Jasper Griegson's, dubbed Britain's best complainer, who for the past year has been hired by IPC magazines as the official complainer at *Woman's Realm*. While his letters have led to readers winning substantial compensation, he had not expected to have grounds for complaint himself.

Tongue firmly in cheek he wrote to the "personnel manager" at Smith Square complaining about the poor quality of candidates in the recent Tory leadership contest. Modestly he offered his own services, and wrote: "My readers and I, concerned that UK Plc is rudderless, feel that a strong, bold and strident leader is now needed. Although I have not been directly involved in politics, I was a school prefect at Oakthorpe Junior School in 1969-71."

Central office failed to see the joke and telephoned John Mellon, chairman of IPC magazines, demanding Griegson be sacked immediately. He was.

THANK goodness Tayside MP Bill Walker resigned as a divisional director of Stagecoach last year. Just weeks later one of the company's buses reversed over driver Thomas Butcher, who later died of massive head injuries.

Now the company has been found guilty of two serious infringements of the health and safety act. Sentence on the directors is awaited.

At every election Walker has commended the birch to his constituents as the solution for yobs with "no respect for life and limb". Does he think company directors with no respect for life and limb should be treated the same way?

HOUSE OF COMMONS SUMMER SHORT STORY

A RESEARCH assistant close to Labour's kitchen cabinet (whom we shall call X) loses his regular girlfriend and finds a replacement in a young Labour party enthusiast.

She breaks with her steady boyfriend and goes off with X, who introduces her to the pleasures of bondage and cocaine. She is not enamoured of either and returns to her original boyfriend. He is outraged by her tale of how she was used, and seeks out X and beats him up.

X then displays the other aspect of his sexual orientation and, in a lift at the House of Commons, makes a clumsy groping approach at another MP's research assistant (male). This person does not appreciate the attention and there is an ugly exchange. Word of these happenings leak and MPs suspect that sources hostile to Labour are keeping the story for use at a suitable moment — perhaps on the eve of a general election! Pure fiction, of course.

MOBILE phone addiction is proving a major hang-up for Muhammed Afzal, the wannabe Labour MP for Birmingham's Small Heath-Sparkbrook constituency.

The *Eye* has already described how he used the phone, supplied and paid for by the city, to make 33 private calls in one month to his bosom pal, Khawaja Mohammed Shafique, chair of the Pakistani Forum. Now copies of the phone bills show a wealth of other private calls, too.

There were, for example, nine calls to the *Daily Jang* newspaper, the 16 calls to Pakistani Forum vice chairman Mohammed Ishtiaq (who doubles up as chairman of Sparkbrook Labour Party), and the 18 calls to a Yousaf Qumar. All these people are closely involved with Afzal's campaign to become an MP. Could it be that the city council's taxpayers are unknowingly subsidising Afzal's election campaign?

They may, however, be reassured to know that at least some of the calls went on providing a vital service. Afzal, who owns a restaurant on Handsworth's Lozells Road, also made 18 calls to a local taxi-firm after midnight, apparently calling cabs for his customers. Of course it is possible Afzal's claim that he repays the cost of these calls is true. But strangely no one at the council seems to know anything about that.

Coun Afzal has also been terribly keen to emphasise the unimportance of his links with the Pakistani Forum. That is understandable. After all, it would be terrible if anyone were to get the idea that the £13,500 annual funding the forum gets from the city was being diverted into a political campaign for one councillor. His claims that he has little involvement with the forum and that he has never addressed it are rather undermined, however, by a series of *Daily Jang* reports of his electioneering-style addresses, all accompanied by pictures of Afzal stuffing his face at the forum's lavish luncheons, surrounded by his Labour party lackeys from Small Heath and Sparkbrook.

Those lackeys don't just go to the meals. A cross-referencing of the Pakistani Forum's executive with the Labour party membership lists show the forum is effectively Labour-controlled. A nice little campaign earner if ever there was one. Chairman Shafique is reported in the *Daily Jang* asking members to vote for Afzal.

Afzal's tactics pale, however, when contrasted with those of his main rival, Small Heath MP Roger Godsiff, who has recruited new members so enthusiastically that a Labour party investigation has found that 400 of them may not exist, except as proxy voting cards. If they do exist it's in a strange kind of political limbo: none is on the electoral roll in Sparkbrook or Small Heath.

Faced with such a shower power-brokers at Labour's headquarters in London's Walworth Road are considering retaining the suspension order on the Small Heath and Sparkbrook constituencies until after the general election. That would allow them to impose an outside Asian candidate with a respectable pedigree. It's a radical move and one thing is certain: it will unite Afzal and Godsiff as never before.

'Backbiter'

"And this is the sitting room and the bedroom, and the toilet, and..."

NOOKS and CORNERS

HATRED of old buildings is a widespread condition in Britain, but it does not usually — at least overtly — determine official policy. In Liverpool, however, it does.

Here is an instructive paragraph in the draft "parks and open spaces strategy" for Liverpool prepared by the planning and transportation and environmental maintenance services of Liverpool city council which deals with "park buildings":

"Park buildings are a maintenance liability and can attract vandalism. They can also be visually intrusive and will be reduced to the minimum needed, consistent with the effective management of the parks. Where listed buildings exist they will, if possible, be found a long term use. Other buildings will be progressively eliminated."

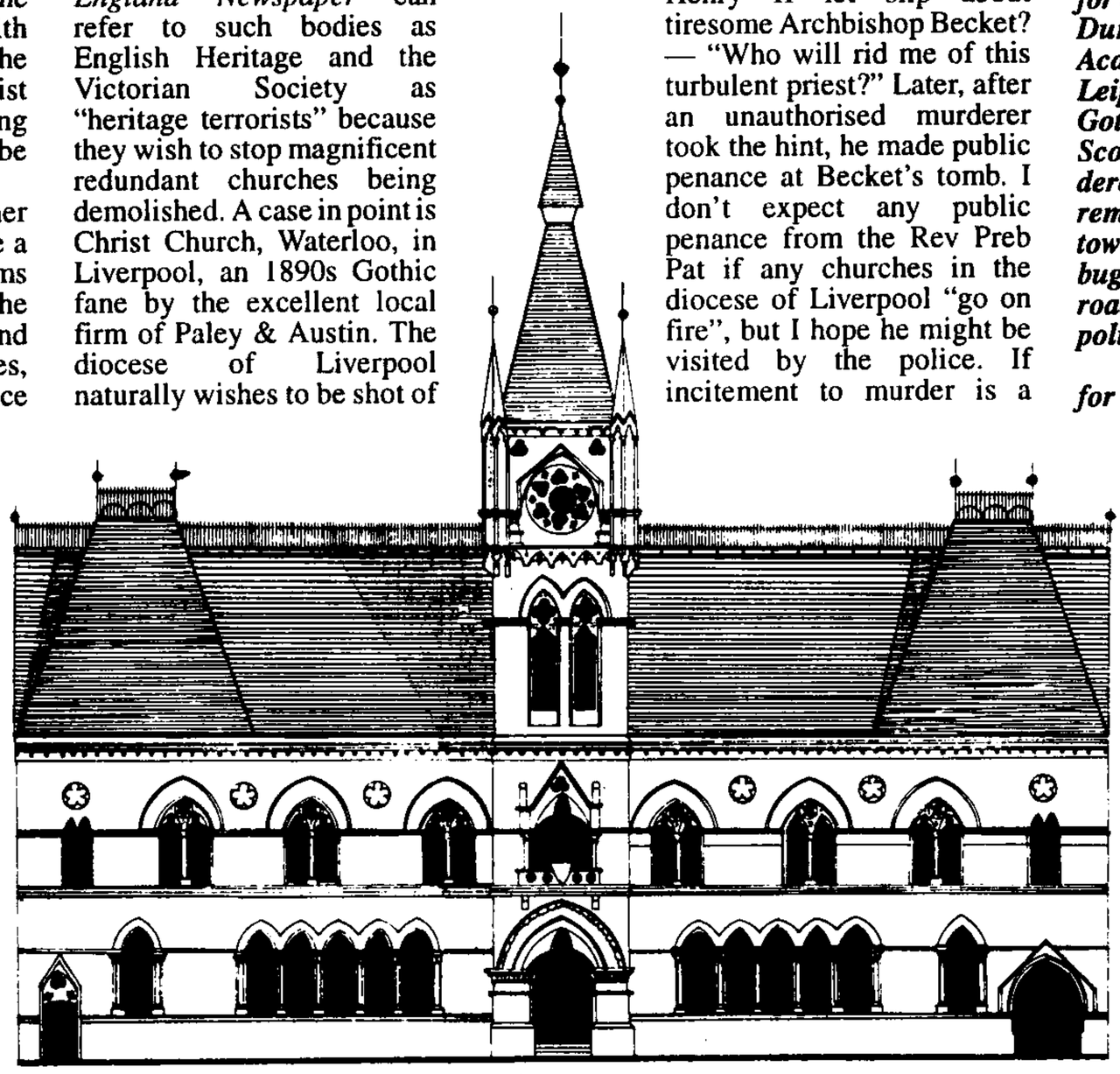
Well, *all* buildings — whether bungalows or bicycle sheds — are a maintenance liability, but that seems no reason to eliminate them. The same could be said for lawns and flower beds, after all. Besides, buildings often define and enhance parkland. Parks contain such things as lodges, gardeners' cottages, greenhouses, statues, fountains and follies which can be interesting and beautiful things themselves. Why liquidate them if English Heritage has not got round to listing them? And, after all, unlisted structures can still be architecture that gives pleasure. So what is Liverpool's ideal park? Flat tarmac and grass, I suppose, or perhaps just flat, maintenance-free tarmac.

At least the planning and transportation and environmental maintenance people are not appealing for public assistance in the elimination of unwanted park buildings. It is left to the Church of England to do that.

Once upon a time the church behaved like a national, established institution and one with a sense of public responsibility. Now, of course, the Careyite CofE is but a low church sect which resents outside interference and positively *hates* old church buildings (*Eyes passim ad nauseam*). And the financial acumen of the church commissioners which has bankrupted the church now plays into the iconoclasts' hands.

So an editorial in a recent issue of *The Church of England Newspaper* can refer to such bodies as English Heritage and the Victorian Society as "heritage terrorists" because they wish to stop magnificent redundant churches being demolished. A case in point is Christ Church, Waterloo, in Liverpool, an 1890s Gothic fane by the excellent local firm of Paley & Austin. The diocese of Liverpool naturally wishes to be shot of it; others think it should be restored and reused. A reasonable subject for debate, surely?

But here is the Reverend Prebendary Patrick Dearnley's contribution to this debate. In a letter to the newspaper on the subject of useless old churches in Waterloo, Rev Prebendary writes: "If, at this time of financial stringency for the commissioners, it is proposed to expend further money on this issue, I will only applaud any unauthorised diocesan arsonist who resorts to 'direct action' to forestall such a move." What was it Henry II let slip about tiresome Archbishop Becket? — "Who will rid me of this turbulent priest?" Later, after an unauthorised murderer took the hint, he made public penance at Becket's tomb. I don't expect any public penance from the Rev Preb Pat if any churches in the diocese of Liverpool "go on fire", but I hope he might be visited by the police. If incitement to murder is a crime, then so, surely, must be incitement to arson.



JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH: Leiper's Dumbarton Borough Halls & Academy

MONEY may be in short supply but huge dollops of it can always be found from the taxpayer to build new roads or law courts. Indeed, building new law courts is one of Britain's few growth industries.

Dumbarton on the Clyde — seat of King Arthur — wants a fancy new sheriff court. As I have already described, there is a fine redundant building with empty land behind ideal for conversion for courts. This is the old Dumbarton Borough Halls & Academy designed by William Leiper in 1865, one of the first Gothic revival buildings in Scotland. The building is now derelict and damaged, but it remains a vital landmark in a town which has been thoroughly buggered up by planners, road engineers and local politicians.

But this site is not good enough for the local politicians. Lest the £10 million sheriff court development go instead to neighbouring and rival Clydebank, the district council has decided to sell off a chunk of Dumbarton Common, which has been in public ownership for more than eight centuries. And a proposal that a referendum be held on the issue of flogging common land to the Scottish Courts Administration was defeated by the casting vote of Provost Pat O'Neill. Such is the respect of the local anti-Blairite Labour mafia for democracy, let alone its concern for civic architecture and amenity.

'Piloti'

Pseuds Corner

Dress: For my first book, I used to put on a jacket and tie because I thought one had to dress up for the occasion. Now I often just wear a gown. It might be an Yves St Laurent gown — either in blue or white — depending on my mood. I like to wear pink in summer.

PETER ACKROYD
Marie Claire

PROSTITUTE WITH AIDS WANTED FOR ART PROJECT
Contact Tony Kaye 0171 287 2509

Advertisement
Guardian

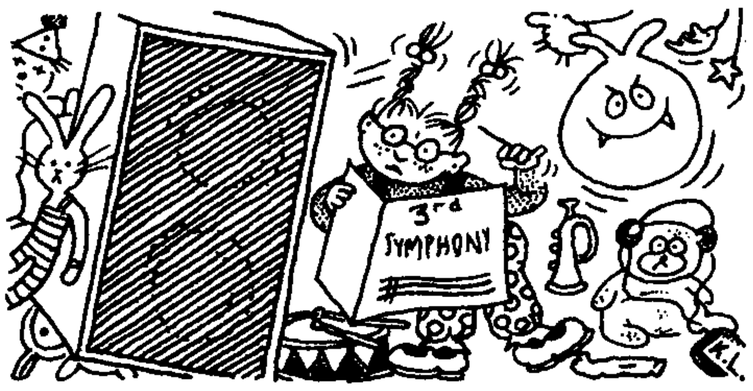
There's no easy gimmick to hang this on; no facile lifestyle demographic hook. The zeitgeist is as the zeitgeist does, and its slaves row the boat ashore. Better by far to watch from your own gondola, make up your own dance steps, let them come to you. Watch the scene and the herd through your own prism.

CHRIS ROBERTS
Editorial, Ikon

A vortex of community and compassion that somehow overcomes fate and death. Wherever I go in the world I know I will have this book with me.

MICHAEL ONDAATJE
Bookseller advertisement
for John Berger's 'To The Wedding'

My two-and-a-half-year old daughter's favourite piece of music is Lutoslawski's Third Symphony. I've liked it since I heard it at the Proms a dozen



years ago. The first time I played it to her she sat rapt throughout and since then she asks to hear it again almost daily. She turns to me from time to time and says "Cello?" "Drum?" and more often "It's coming... there it is!" (or sometimes simply "Bang!" as the fortissimo repeated-note signal of four quavers that initiates and dominates the piece returns in various guises. (Actually, being an infant Welsh speaker she says "Soddgrwth?" "Drwrm?" "Mae'n dod... co fe!" but that's another story.)

LUCIEN JENKINS
Classical Music

This vision is not limited to Britain but is worldwide. When humankind moves out into space, the Vision will become Universal in the true sense of the word. I believe there are other forms of life out there. Infertility is such a common problem, they must also suffer from it. *Issue* will serve them.

SUSAN RICE
Issue (Magazine of the
National Fertility Association)

The strongest influence any work of art has had on me is Malevich's Black Square. It has to do with emptiness, the void and with what the Tibetans call "such-ness" (full evidence). It is a black mirror that sucks everything in. The Black Square is not there to reflect in the normal sense.

It is there to reflect a point within yourself to create the feeling of inner peace.

MARINA ABRAMOVIC
Guardian

It [Michael Barrymore's on-stage announcement of his homosexuality] was history in the making. One of the most incredible experiences of my life.

JAMES MITTON
News of the World

Contributors: J. Thomas, E. Adlum, I.Greaves, L. Neale, E. Quigley, J. Foster, D. Yarwood, S. Mann.

£10 paid for entries

EYE TV

Emmerdale

(Yorkshire)

AFTER 23 years *Emmerdale*, Yorkshire's twice-weekly ITV soap opera, reached its 2000th edition last week and threw on an hour-long special to celebrate.

Few television shows live this long, but *Emmerdale* more than most is an illustration of adaptation to survive. Originally christened *Emmerdale Farm*, it started out as a lunchtime rural rambler for those who found *The Archers* — at that time playing simultaneously on Radio 4 — too exciting. It was always the runt among the litter of TV soaps: viewed by too few, reviewed by almost no one. (Many veteran national critics, writing of the 2000th edition, confessed it was the first they'd ever seen).

But the aggressive new ITV managements of the late 80s onwards threatened it with a humane injection unless it started producing some beef. With Phil Redmond of *Brookside* as consultant and Mervyn Watson, ex-*Coronation Street* as producer, *Emmerdale* — as it was hopefully retitled in the *Dallas* fashion — has come to rest as a cross between Redmond's current show and Watson's old one.

To widespread tabloid coverage and climbing ratings, Zoe Tate, the local vet, came out as a lesbian; a 747 landed on Emmerdale and flattened some of the more old-fashioned characters; and a recent car crash removed another. Old Seth, a wrinkly bloke in a flat cap who says "ay oop" a lot, remains one of the serial's few links with its gentler origins, although there is the occasional dutiful reference to "feeding the pigs" or "restocking the river" alongside the rapes, adultery and coroner's inquests.

All successful soaps have been based around some kind of local accent, whether that of Dallas, Manchester, Australia, Liverpool or the East End. *Eldorado* and *Castles* failed in part because they were received-pronunciation serials. But the lingo spoken in each of the shows is a compressed dialect, a matter of repeating a few catchphrases. *EastEnders* revolves around "sorted" (the matter is resolved) and "innit" (do you not agree?); *Brookside* scriptwriters endlessly recycle "sound" (a good idea), "made-up" (happy), "bizzies" (HM constabulary) and "no-mark" (loser). *Emmerdale* depends on some stage Yorkshire — "t" for "the" and "us" for "our" — but also "a brew" for a cup of tea, "tupping" for sexual intercourse and "a bit of welly" for energetic endeavour.

In the extended 2000th edition there was a great deal of tupping going on, conducted with much welly. Kim Tate — the local rich bitch, stroking the mane of her thoroughbred with one hand while punching out numbers on her portable phone with the other — was tupping a young employee of her husband's in a hotel room even as her old man advances on the room to raise a professional matter with the lad.

Ken Adlington, a village farmer, wanted to tup Zoe, even though she was not as other woman, and lured her to his barn with talk of a sick ewe. In fact it was him who was a sick ram. With the standards typical of mainstream television, the show was careful that Zoe and her lover Emma did nothing to frighten the horses — they tended to gaze at each other moistly — but was happy to depict the heterosexual rape of the vet.

Like the other stages in the renovation of *Emmerdale*, the birthday edition was efficiently if predictably done. Andy Lynch's script was carefully written to accommodate viewers who were tuning in for the first time to see what all the fuss was about: the main point, of course, of all the anniversary publicity. Characters kept helpfully identifying themselves — "It might be easy for some folks to walk by on the other side but that's not Betty Eagleton!" — or considerately summarising recent events: "Remember what Jessica said on the day she left?" / "Aye, it's been a year now." Very very rarely, there would be a flash of real country poetry: "She may be blighted, that girl. What if she gets a reputation for being unlucky?"

So what would a potential new viewer of *Emmerdale* find if they tried out this special? Well, a series which — for all its lesbians and its rapes — remains the staidest of the soaps: an angry characters says "B-b-u..." and then stops: another is told off for saying "Damn!" A series that occasionally manages a knowing little jab at the gentrification of Yorkshire: Zoe's sapphic companion runs a tapas bar in Harrogate. But, finally, a show which, like all the British television soaps, has become more popular at the price of becoming preposterous: a desperate series of ratings-massaging stunts, the characters having conveniently forgotten that a jumbo jet fell on them only very recently because the script requires them to square up to the next sensation.

Emmerdale has never been great but it was once at least different. Appropriately enough, this rural saga has survived to 2000 by following the prevailing fashions in ITV — vulgarity, sensation, imitation — like some big dumb sheep.

'Square Eyes'

I-BSkyB

HOT on TV... Sky One's series MODELS INC for one reason alone, actress Kylie Travis, the hottest babe on the planet.

Fellas, imagine the best bits of Michelle Pfeiffer, Pamela Anderson and Malandra Burrows combined in one woman. Then take a very cold shower.

GARRY 'MENSA' BUSHELL
The Sun

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

MEDIA NEWS

FANS of the OJ trial on Sky News may be disappointed by the channel's coverage of the forthcoming Rose West hearing.

A year ago, in preparation for the great event, a Sky hack spent a month "going native" in Gloucester, tracking down a number of oddballs with fascinating tales of life and love at 25 Cromwell Street. The tapes were duly put under lock and key for use in a post-trial documentary.

Unfortunately Sky News's chief then embarked on a series of sackings, getting rid of professional journalists and replacing them with cheap school-leavers and any Aussie backpacker looking for a couple of shifts.

The result? In a bid to save money by reusing old tapes the West material has been wiped by over-zealous newcomers. A Sky hack has now been despatched to Gloucester with orders to track down the waifs and strays again.

If that fails, there is one other ray of hope. Some of Sky's exclusive interviews had already been sent by mistake to rivals at ITN, a professional news outfit which may now be persuaded to return a few of these fascinating titbits.

NEWS media in London should beware the gavotte-like evasiveness of the Water Services Association, the body which fields media inquiries and requests for interviews with spokesmen for Britain's water companies.

The association is always eager to be of service — after a fashion. Yes, of course you can interview a spokesman from one of the water authorities that has imposed a hosepipe ban, it tells programme producers. Then shortly before the live interview is due to be broadcast, the WSA rings to apologise and says it can only find a spokesman from Thames Water.

The spokesman, when asked about hosepipe bans in other parts of the country, merely responds that Thames does not have any problems and repeats the answer over and over again, much to the annoyance and frustration of the interviewer.

THOSE BBC viewers horrified by Britain's garish strip at the world athletics championships in Gothenburg need look no further than the commentary box: blame commentator Brendan Foster.

The British team outfits were produced by Foster's company, the Tyneside-based "View From", which hardly shied away from letting the viewer know it was responsible for a range considered the antithesis of style by most athletics correspondents. The large, in-your-face "View From" logo on every vest and tracksuit outdid the more subtle advertising/product placement of the big players like Nike, Puma and Adidas.

The BBC, a non-commercial broadcaster which of course does not advertise, could not help giving Foster's kit a huge plug. But unsuspecting viewers or sporting shoppers may care to ask why the "View From" logo, apparently the planet Earth surrounded by revolving satellites, is so very similar to that which announces every BBC sports programme. Are they indeed related?

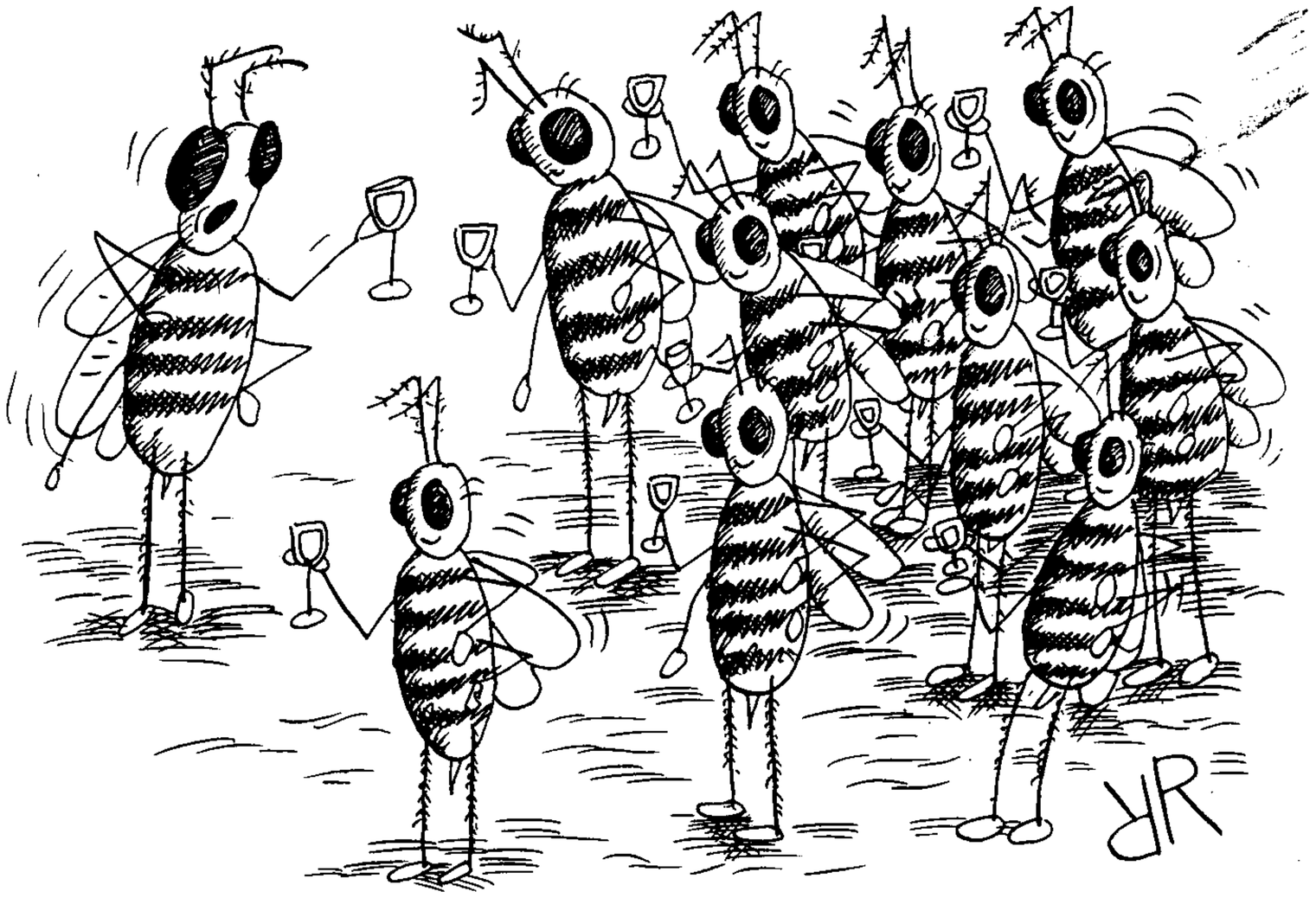
ANOTHER triumph for John Birt's ever-vigilant army of bureaucrats! A member of the BBC's news and current affairs department has just received the following memo from the paper-shufflers:

"As a result of information taken from expense claim 000585492 submitted for payment by yourself, you have incurred a **taxable benefit** *of £0.30 being the cost of newspapers obtained from the Copthorne Hotel, Quayside, Newcastle on 9.6.95. This advice is to inform you that this sum together with any cumulo total will be reported to the Inland Revenue as a benefit in kind at the end of the 1995/96 tax year. Current amount reportable: £0.30. Cumulo amount reportable: £0.30."*

SOMEONE at the Midland Bank, which is running a nationwide wine competition to keep its middle-class customers happy, seems to have had too much to drink.

With a free case of wine on offer, one of the questions was: "Which two Chilean dictators banned wine growing?" A puzzled customer phoned to say that he could think of only one Chilean dictator — President Pinochet. The wise competition writers then reprimanded him: President Allende, they said, was also a dictator.

When the man told them Allende had been democratically elected, Midland staff remained unperturbed. The Listening Bank ruled that this misinformation was not worth correcting as it would "cost too much money".



"Gentlemen, The Queen..."

HACKWATCH: MICHAEL WINNER

MICHAEL WINNER is well known as a second-rate film director, but even better known as a first-rate name dropper.

In this latter capacity he is now paid £150,000 a year to write a weekly column for the *News of the World* Here's how he earns it.

26 March: An encounter with the Labour leader. "I've always liked Tony Blair," Winner reports. "And I asked him a question I asked John Major the other day. It's a question I ask a lot. 'On a scale of one to ten, how happy have you been in the last year?' " We wait, agog, for the reply, but we wait in vain. "I won't give you Tony's exact answer because this was a private talk over a cup of tea."

2 April: This week's photo shows our hero with rock guitarist Jimmy Page, who lives next door to him. "Jimmy is an angel," Winner reports. "He keeps the house beautifully, never a sound from him, a perfect neighbour in all respects."

9 April: "I shall miss Kenny Everett. Not that I saw him that often, but I've known him for 15 years..." And, sure enough, there is a picture of himself hobnobbing with Kenny Everett and Margaret Thatcher. Elsewhere on the page is a picture of Winner with snooker player Jimmy White. "He's a friend of mine," Winner confirms.

23 April: "Tragedy struck my friend Marlon Brando this week with the terrible suicide of his daughter Cheyenne," Winner records gravely. "I have known Marlon for over 25 years. As far as I am concerned he is the kindest, most decent person you could wish to meet. And he's unbelievably jolly!"

30 April: Winner rushes to the defence of Rupert Murdoch. "I have a personal reason for being greatly indebted to Mr Murdoch (and I don't mean the slight money I get for writing this!) I once met him in the Concorde lounge and asked 'Why are you carrying suits over your shoulder?' He said he never took anything but hand luggage on planes because it shortened the time at airports." This had never occurred to Winner, apparently. But, he reveals, "I have travelled like that ever since."

7 May. "I am always dubious about people who have oil paintings of themselves in their houses. Neither they nor the oil paintings are usually very attractive. It seems a supreme conceit." Presumably these strictures don't apply to hacks who fill their column with photographs of themselves. Today there is a picture of Winner with "my friend Michael Palin". There is also a rant about shops which sell sub-standard goods at inflated prices, illustrated by a picture of his chum Charles Bronson. Why so? "I think we need Charles Bronson with a machine gun to knock a few of the bosses off. That would bring prices down like lightning! Gosh, if only life could be that easy!" Gosh indeed.

14 May: "Everyone says to me: 'It must be nice to be a millionaire — I wish I had lots of money!" Winner is quick to disabuse them. "Money," he observes, with startling originality, "does not buy happiness."

21 May: Money does, however, provide plenty of opportunities for showing off. "No one knows how much I'm worth except me and I'm not telling," he writes. "But in the last two years idiot estimators have put it at £5 million (Nesta Wyn Ellis in a book on bachelors) to £51.5 million in *Business Age* magazine in August last year..." Meanwhile, having ingeniously worked Charles Bronson into a piece about shopping, he now uses a picture of himself with actress Lia Williams to accompany an item on British Rail's London-to-Brighton service. "I spent a lot of time in Brighton a couple of years ago making *Dirty Weekend* with the lovely Lia Williams," he explains.

28 May: Harold Wilson has died — and Winner has some typically illuminating memories of his friendship with the old boy. "I like Harold Wilson," he recalls. "He was extremely likeable." Meanwhile, with no showbiz stars to write about this week, Winner runs a large photo of "my girlfriend Vanessa" in a mini-skirt.

4 June: From the ridiculous to the sublime: this week's celeb-I-have-known is the Dalai Lama. "I remember when I met the Dalai Lama." And, of course, there's a picture to prove it.

11 June: Winner is in philosophical mood. "Our lives consist of nothing but memories," he ruminates. "In our memories are our lives, our friends, and a group of total strangers. The strangers are the so-called celebrities, actors, footballers, politicians who play a part in our daily experiences." Except that for Winner these celebs are not strangers but dear pals. Take Joan Collins. "Somewhere along the line we became friends and she dropped in to see me at my house before her book launch this week (picture above)."

18 June: Winner sings the praises of his favourite radio station, Melody Radio. "It plays, almost without interruption, the sort of music I grew up on. Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, Ella Fitzgerald... relaxing, terrific orchestrations. I met most of these people..."

25 June: "About a year ago I was sitting alone with John Major." As ever, he asked the PM how happy he had been in the last 12 months. " 'I won't answer that, Michael,' said Mr Major." Fancy!

2 July: Why all the fuss about Hugh Grant? After all, "my pal Robert Mitchum was arrested and arraigned on drug charges and it did his career no harm."

16 July: The Rolling Stones are on tour, as is Marianne Faithfull, and Julie Christie is appearing on the West End stage. Could this be a cue for some more celebrity-laden bragging? You bet. "I made films with Marianne Faithfull, Michael Crawford and Oliver Reed, I met the Rolling Stones even before their first album was out... It was a terrific time and I'm proud to have been a part of it."

23 July: Charlie Sheen has admitted to paying £33,000 for call girls. So what? "The Sheen family are extremely talented," Winner points out. "I had lunch with his actor-dad Martin only last week..." Winner has also acquired a new famous friend, the hypnotist Paul McKenna. "I met him at a party this week," he announces with understandable pride.

6 August: Lambeth council has been condemned by an official report for wasting ratepayers' money. Winner adds his twopennyworth to the debate: "I filmed a lot of *Death Wish III* in Lambeth and saw council contractors working away, rather slowly, I thought. Charlie Bronson commented on it." He seizes the chance to reproduce a photo of himself with "Charlie" Bronson. Meanwhile, since street-crime is in the news, the director of *Death Wish III* informs us that he himself was once stopped late at night by a London policeman. "He didn't recognise me," Winner reveals, incredulously.

13 August: Winner is gripped by TV coverage — on the "excellent Sky News" — of the OJ Simpson trial. Yup, you've guessed it: "I have particular interest in the proceedings because OJ and Nicole, whom he's accused of murdering, were close friends of mine."

20 August: "It does not surprise me that Julia Smith gave Princess Di a thick ear." It shouldn't surprise us either. For, inevitably, "I've known Julia for more years than she'd like me to mention, long before she became Mrs Julia Carling, wife of Will who gave undue attention to the Princess!" And what of Di? "I'm rather fond of her, too," he confides.

Lucky Diana; lucky Julia; and lucky, lucky readers. As a *Screws* reader from Norwich wrote to him in June: "To spread such happiness, you must be a very happy and centred and very special, caring person." After modestly reproducing this tribute in his column, the bashful Winner begged to differ. "No," he insisted, "I'm nowhere near as good as that." You said it, mate.

State visit

THE Emir of Kuwait arrived in Britain today at the start of a three-day state visit hosed by the Queen.

Halifax Courier

LEGAL NEWS

THE saga of David Cocks QC and his complaint to the unimpeachable professional conduct committee of the Bar Council — about Jonathan Goldberg QC, for his handling of the defence in the Roger Levitt fraud case — continues to excite gossip and speculation.

The latest talk among barristers concerns the inner workings of the PCC itself. Under normal procedures, a complaint is first given to a senior barrister who reports back to the committee as to whether the complaint has any *prima facie* merit. The identity of the reporting member is supposed to remain a closely guarded secret, and one would expect this reporting member to be neutral — presumably, anyone with an interest would disqualify himself from the task.

In the case of Cocks's complaint against Goldberg, however, the reporting member was one Kudlip Singh QC, who is a junior to Goldberg, both in being called to the Bar and being made and a silk. Singh, who took more than a year to read the papers and reach a conclusion, has not been on speaking terms with Goldberg since 1982, when Goldberg publicly accused him of "immaturity" during a drugs trial at Reading. He is nonetheless on warm terms with David Cocks and, what is more, Singh's head of chambers, John Mathew QC, is one of Cocks's closest friends at the Bar. He even acted for Cocks in one of the latter's bids to reduce the maintenance for his son by his former mistress Jill Hammerton.

No doubt the complaint to the Bar Council against Cocks and his prosecution team in the Levitt case, Jonathan Fisher and Jane Bewsey — that they were guilty of hypocrisy and of misleading the attorney-general about their involvement in negotiating a plea-bargain with Levitt — will be sent to another, more obviously neutral assessor.

A SENIOR partner in Charles Russell, one of London's most renowned and respected law firms, has had a complaint against him by a client upheld.

David Parr, a design and manufacturing engineer, engaged the Charles Russell solicitor David Watt to fight a case for him against another firm. The case was settled out of court in Parr's favour, and the solicitor told Parr he could expect £425,000 plus costs.

Money went back and forth, but £48,000 was wrongfully transferred from the client's account. When Parr took the case to the Solicitors Complaints Bureau (SCB) he was astonished to receive the response "nothing to investigate". Next he went to the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal, and discovered that the firm of Charles Russell was the SCB's own solicitor. The tribunal referred the case back to the SCB with an independent solicitor investigating, but again the complaint was rebutted.

Finally Parr went to the former head of the Legal Action Group, Ole Hansen. Now, four years after the original complaint, the disciplinary tribunal has held that Watt, of Charles Russell, took client's money without authority and the information on his bill was inadequate. It also ruled that when Watt realised Parr wanted to complain about him he should at once have told him to seek independent advice. Watt was found guilty of conduct unbecoming a solicitor, fined £5,000 and ordered to pay Parr's costs.

CHILD ABUSE

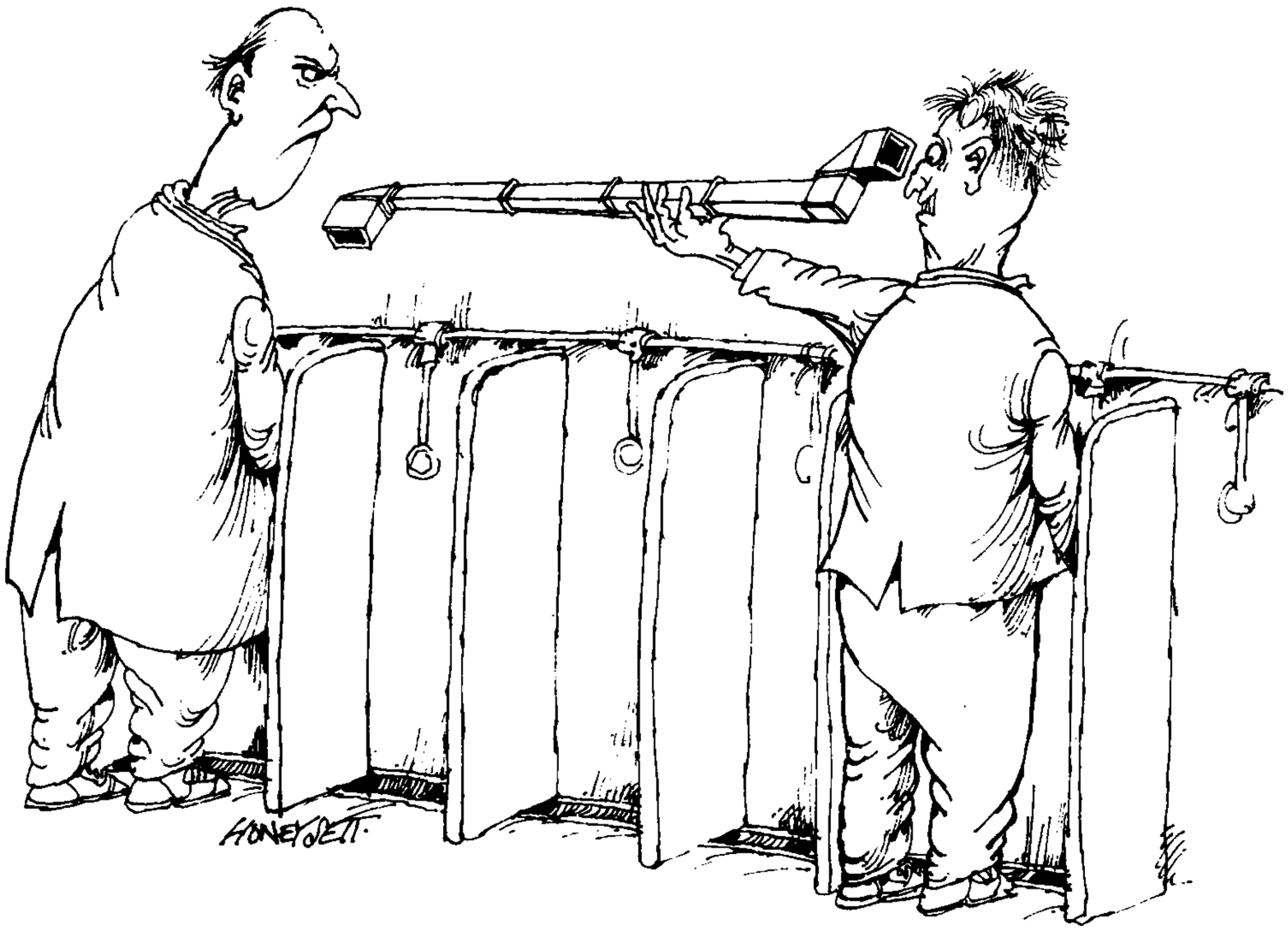
THE 13-year-old "W" child taken from her mother after accusations of child abuse in the Orkney islands five years ago is now back in Orkney in a children's home waiting for the courts to allow her to return to her mother.

Unfortunately she has encountered yet another delay. After waiting since May for a court date, the advocates for her court hearing were finally booked into bed and breakfast accommodation on the island in readiness. But after one hour in court, the sheriff called proceedings to a halt: he had to go to a VJ Day memorial. The court will sit again in six weeks' time.

The child's long ordeal has included 11 months of treatment by the discredited social worker Liz MacLean. Ayrshire sheriff Colin Miller described her techniques as "so inadequate that nothing reliable can be taken from the hearsay evidence of any child recorded".

And what compensation will there be for Mrs "W", deprived of her child for five years? A recent legal opinion delivered by Lords Jauncey, Lane, Ackner, Browne-Wilkinson and Nolan decided that social workers and psychiatrists employed by a local authority owed the child and his parents no duty of care.

Meanwhile the two youngest "W" children remain in care. Since 1989 social workers have ignored a hearing decision allowing them monthly contact with their mother and ignored professional social work recommendations for rehabilitation. Their ordeal continues.



FURTHER EDUCATION

MORE news of family favours in higher education and London University's Birkbeck College, which suffered a bout of nepotism when its registrar, Brian Harwood, employed a new secretary.

The post was not advertised and the successful candidate — Mrs Brian Harwood — was never interviewed. Meanwhile personnel officer Madeline Powell found her daughter a similarly unadvertised post in the registry. Staff were particularly peeved because another member of the administration staff was being made redundant at the time because of "restructuring" while the management furiously recruited elsewhere.

That member of staff eventually won an industrial tribunal for unfair dismissal. Baroness Blackstone, a Labour spokesman in the Lords, is master of Birkbeck College and she of course wholeheartedly supported high standards in public life during the dispute: she ticked off the Unison officials for making personal attacks on nepotistic members of staff.

NOTICE

The British Council Library will close for Easter on Friday 14 April 1995 and will re-open on Tuesday 18 February 1995

The British Council Library, Lesotho

NUCLEAR WASTE

JOHN GUMMER, environment secretary, has arranged for a crucial public inquiry into whether it is safe or desirable to bury tens of thousands of tonnes of radioactive nuclear waste under the plutonium factory at Sellafield to open almost in secret.

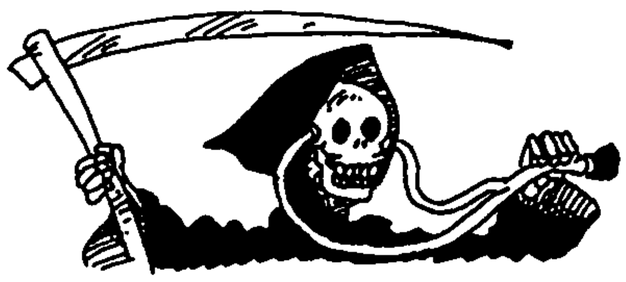
Extravagant attempts are being made to hide from the public what is going on. The inquiry is officially into whether to build a "rock characterisation facility" — described as a "rock laboratory" — 1,000ft below ground, just to test the water. In practice, once the shafts have been built at a cost of £100-£200 million they will be used as the entry point for construction of a full-scale repository, popularly known as The Dump. This is not a nuclear conspiracy theorist's fantasy. It has been said by Professor John Knill, who for the last eight years has been the government's top adviser on nuclear waste.

The inquiry will not even deal with major issues such as safety or the merits of surface storage, where waste can be monitored. It will be a local planning inquiry designed by Gummer to overrule the decision of Cumbria county council to refuse permission.

The application is being made by NIREX, the Nuclear industry radioactive waste executive, which is refusing to allow other participants to see its transcripts of proceedings. This is unprecedented and has surprised even the inspector, solicitor Chris McDonald.

Martin Forwood, spokesman for the National Anti-Dump Network, said: "If the 'rock laboratory' gets permission, there will then be a gap of about 10 years while they drill. Then there will be an official inquiry into the Dump itself and it will be told that this inquiry had, in the national interest, decided to go ahead. While in fact this inquiry will have been prevented from discussing the national issues and there will be no official transcript to establish the facts."

Gummer has also decided that when the inquiry opens on 5 September at the Civic Hall in Cleaton Moor there will be no secretariat from his ministry and no press officer because it has not been classed as a major inquiry.



DOING THE ROUNDS

ALL IS not well with the NHS in Scotland, with settlements for medical negligence in the first six months of this year already exceeding the total cost in 1994.

The government's response — as ever — has been to hide behind rose-tinted statistics. Last month novice Scottish health minister Lord James Douglas-Hamilton claimed the amount of taxpayers' money used to settle claims over the last five years was £5.3 million. In fact the payouts made by Scotland's 15 health boards alone come to £9.3 million, with further costs incurred by the country's 46 trusts who are legally responsible for staff cock-ups under the crown indemnity scheme.

Claims are particularly common at **Falkirk Royal Infirmary, Kilmarnock's Crosshouse Trust, Ayr Hospital** and **Kirkcaldy's Ayr hospital**. Whether they represent a worsening in staff competence or an increasingly litigious Scottish public is unclear. But if the trend continues the NHS may soon be spending as much of its budget on negligence pay-outs and legal fees as administration.

● **SOLIHULL's** £40 million brand-new-but-already-doomed hospital is being forced into a merger with **Heartlands hospital** after it clocked up a projected deficit of £8 million in its first year. A review into the fiasco by Price Waterhouse has revealed that "a catalogue of basic management errors left it with no chance of surviving in the internal market".

Managers made ludicrous assumptions about future income levels, running costs were £3.8 million higher than expected and the predicted "repatriation" of local people to the new unit just didn't happen. Solihull's Tory-run "flagship" local council is thought to have exerted considerable pressure on the health authority to rush through preparations for trust status which, by the time contracting and pricing errors were spotted, couldn't be corrected. Hospital staff are bitterly disappointed about the hospital's failure, but as one consultant put it: "It may be closing but at the moment I'm enjoying it. All the managers have buggered off and we've been left alone to get on with treating patients. Just like the good old days."

● **CHEVIOT and Wansbeck Trust (CAWT)** has bid farewell to finance director Bryan Thompson who resigned less than a year into the job. Thompson's overly commercial and abrasive approach to the trust's main purchaser, **Northumberland Health Authority**, is allegedly the nub of the problem. Like **Solihull hospital**, the bust trust could now be forced into a merger with another such as **Newcastle's Freeman trust**. CAWT lost its chair Richard Harbottle and chief executive John O'Brien at the end of last year and is now planning on scrapping round-the-clock staffing of operating theatres.

● **MANCHESTER health commission** has sent its director of public health and health policy Dr Gavin Thoms on "extended leave" just three months after he started. Dr Thoms is said to have had a "fundamental difference of opinion" with chief executive Neil Goodwin following a clear-out of five longstanding senior staff.

Manchester's previous public health chief Dr Mary Spencely quit the post during the merger of Manchester's district health authority and family health services authority that spawned the health commission. Goodwin has also replaced the internal candidates for his job, Richard Popplewell and Barry Thomas, and is now upsetting Manchester's GPs who feel that money meant to subsidise their staff is again being diverted elsewhere.

In March the GPs won a three-year wrangle in the high court to try to recoup £260,000 of the general medical services fund which the then FHSA had illegally squandered on eight administrative "facilitators" (*Eyes passim*). Shortly after, FHSA chairman Peter Turnbull and chief executive Gina Shakespeare resigned (the latter with £55,000 pocket money) but it appears that lessons have yet to be learnt. Goodwin is now proposing to spend this year's allocation on introducing citizens' advice bureaux to health centres. All very well, but it's not what the money is for. Expect more litigation.

● **ABERDEEN's Royal Hospitals Trust** is in the grip of a £1 million "efficiency saving" to see it through the autumn. Out go overtime for sisters and the use of bank nurses, in comes ward amalgamation. The success of this plan appears to rely on the unlikely event that no staff will ever be off sick.

● AVERIL DONGWORTH, the phantom bugger of **Luton and Dunstable NHS Trust** (*Eyes passim*), has reemerged from her enforced resignation as a senior manager in charge of re-organising **North Thames regional health authority**. As LADNT's UNISON officer Kumar Sandy put it: "All the health workers are horrified about the tactics she used, and now she's been given this job. It's like a green light to use any means you like to gag health workers."

"We need your bed"

● **UNIVERSITY of Wales NHS trust** has suspended senior nursing manager Peter Ebenezer to coincide with the departure of six staff from **Lansdowne Hospital** for "inappropriate horse play" with senile patients. Staff allegedly put pen marks on the faces of patients and used them as targets to flick rolled-up paper at and also used wheelchair-bound patients as goal-posts. Such complaints have been made for more three years but only recently has the trust decided to act on them.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

HEALTH services for homeless people with mental illness range from "poor to lamentable", according to an NHS health advisory service report.

'MD'

SIGNAL FAILURES

ONE MAN who would agree with Railtrack's safety assessment manager that fragmentation has made the railways less safe is the author of a high-level BR memo leaked to the *Eye*.

"In less than two months I have been involved personally in evacuating on two occasions around 400 passengers from trains and across tracks on the West Coast main line — in circumstances which have seemed inappropriate and amateurish, and potentially highly dangerous," says the author, a long-standing BR manager.

"Response to such incidents is not only slow, but is totally confused, unfocused, disaggregated [*sic*], frustrating to customers and probably carried out not only shambolically but *unsafely*. For example, at Hanslope, a light locomotive was sent 'wrong line' along the track over which some 400 customers were being transferred from one train to another.

"There were staff all over the track — train crew from NLR and ICWC, BRIS staff and Railtrack West Coast Zone people [all fragments of the former BR] — but no one was in overall charge and no one was recognised as being in control. The separation of train operations from infrastructure control has to be the greatest worry."

Another memo sheds more light on the incident at Hanslope, near Milton Keynes. More than 200 people left Euston on the 8.45pm train intending to "rocket to Birmingham in 97 minutes". Instead they were dumped at Milton Keynes station and told to board a later train which was already fairly full. While this train spent the night stranded at Hanslope the royal train passed by on an adjacent track, as well as numerous freight trains. The 410 passengers had no food and drink — not even water — and two pregnant women "became increasingly distressed". All the cellphones on the train had flat batteries by midnight and the hugely disgruntled passengers reached Birmingham 8hr 30 min late.

AS THE government and Railtrack try to assure everyone railways are still as safe as ever — even though Railtrack's own safety-assessment manager believes otherwise — details reach the *Eye* of yet another cost-cutting measure which contributed to the accident at Cowden, Sussex, last autumn.

For more than a century it was standard practice on single-track lines to provide "trap points" at the end of each passing place. When the way ahead was blocked the trap points led into a short blind siding, and when it was safe to go they led back to the main line. Had they been installed at Ashurst, near Cowden, the driver who errantly drove into the path of an oncoming train would have realised his mistake on entering the dead-end siding and the head-on collision would have been avoided.

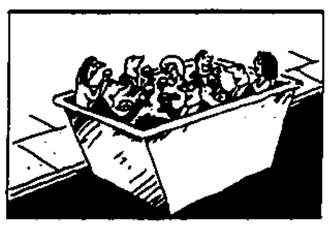
When the line through Cowden was reduced to single track in 1990 trap points *were not installed*. This brings to seven the contributory factors at Cowden, where five people were killed: reduction of two tracks to one, to save money (see *Eye* 875); non-installation of Automatic Train Protection, to save money (see *Eye* 877); non-installation of cab radios, to save money; non-provision of trap points, to save money; non-replacement of old carriages as required after the Clapham Junction accident, to save money; non-provision of a back-up automatic warning magnet at the Ashurst signal where the train should have stopped, to save money; and driver error.

Only one of these was not pre-meditated. It happens to be the only one not connected with the government's penny-pinching attitude to the railways. It happens, too, that the official report on the accident finds the driver's spur-of-the-moment mistake to be "wholly responsible".

'Dr B.Ching'

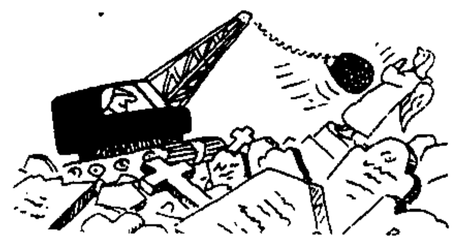
"Flippin' set aside"

Mucksprеader is away



THE Rotten Borough Advertiser

WHERE BRIAN MAWHINNEY GETS HIS IDEAS



FRYING TONIGHT

AS LOCAL councils are forced to put the running of housing estates out to tender, Johnson Fry Property Ltd is setting an example to other private landlords on how to win such contracts.

Big sums of money are involved as the running of more than a million homes comes up for grabs, and JFP has so far shown an interest in managing the housing stock in no fewer than 40 local authority areas.

The company is on the shortlist to control Murkeyside's 50,000 properties and has won the right to run 1,200 homes owned by Westminster council. Its attempts to manage 15,000 homes in Tower Hamlets, however, have attracted rather too much attention.

JFP's bid for Tower Hamlets was headed by one John Swinney. He quit as the borough's head of business services last September with a redundancy deal. Part of Swinney's council job had been the reorganisation of council services — housing included — into business units. Prior to his departure his area of work was the subject of an internal audit into financial irregularities. It concluded that no action would be taken against him.

However, with the knowledgeable Swinney heading the JFP bid, other would-be contractors started doubting they had much chance of winning the housing deal. But then it was discovered that *all* London-based JFP staff working on the bid were former Tower Hamlets employees! Unhappily it also emerged that all those whom JFP had used, including Swinney, were in breach of their contracts of employment with the council. The contracts had stipulated that they would be barred from bidding for council contracts for one year after leaving. The JFP/Swinney-led team left Tower Hamlets last September. John Gummer's environment department was alerted to the oversight and had little option but to back moves to stop JFP bidding for the housing contracts.

In Sheffield, meanwhile, JFP is bidding to run the city's council houses with the help of Ray Gridley — the former housing director of Sheffield council and current md of the Bath-based JFP. In his former job he was largely responsible for running the 1991 world student games (debt to the council: nearly £25 million). Then, Sheffield councillors had some difficult questions for him but he was apparently too ill to answer: he retired with a £200,000 golden handshake on the grounds of ill health. Clearly he's feeling better now.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

■ MURKEYSIDE's Central Library is making ready for a grand exhibition of the life and works of literary giant Charles Dickens.

In preparation it sent posters advertising the event to all the Murkey libraries. The glossy promotion featured Dickens's signature underneath a large illustration — of, er, Tennyson.

The poster was issued from the leisure services directorate of the city council which is headed by Paul Catcheside. His name is familiar to taxpayers who were outraged last year to hear that he had a private business on the side selling old library books — an outside interest he somehow forgot to declare.

MANIFESTO-LY UNFAIR

ANYONE who thought the retirement of Dame Shirley Porter marked a return to milk and honey at Westminster was being very dim.

The swivel-eyed idealogues who now run the city council — many of them Redwood campaigners two months ago — were infuriated that a department of the environment memo leaked in May showed that the "Tory flagship" council was receiving an extra £24 million a year from Whitehall to help keep down its council tax.

Now the ideologues have responded by drawing up a "list of discretionary activities" to be axed by the council if the bungs from central government finally dry up — anything rather than increase council tax for Westminster hard-ups like the queen, Lord Hanson and the Forte family.

The discretionary list envisages massive cuts in basic services — not just the usual proposals to cut the lord mayor's limo and the staff restaurant. "Nursery education, degree of funding for schools, assisted places" are all luxuries which can be done without. As apparently are crime prevention, insurance on council housing and the entire meals-on-wheels service.

"This information is highly sensitive," says the memo circulated to committee chairmen, "because some of these are manifesto promises."

A DUFFIN' UP

THE number of embarrassing investigations taking place in barmy Bent is breaking all records.

Inspector Knacker is investigating four current and ex-Tory councillors; six Tories are being grilled internally; the ombudsman is sorting out another two; and the district auditor another five.

One of those interesting Knacker is Bill Duffin, until recently the chair of housing. While in office Duffin took a job as a book-keeper for a local developer whose planning applications to convert flats into a restaurant kept on being rejected.

Duffin persuaded officers to reconsider the application without declaring his interest, lobbied the planning chair and successfully saw planning permission granted despite officers' objections. In fact he harassed officers so much (he rang them 40 times in one month) they took legal action to stop him.

LATE EXTRA

■ FOLLOWING last issue's clip about Preston council leader Val "Olive Oyl" Wise queue-jumping to get her kids on a council playscheme, she has now removed them, bowing to public pressure. But she has taken out her frustration on council chief executive Geoff Driver whom she has unilaterally banned from the town hall telling him to stay on holiday or face suspension. He had incurred Oyl's wrath by accusing her of meddling in the day-to-day running of the council.

IN BRIEF

REDBRIDGE: While the council pension fund is in disarray after auditors Coopers & Lybrand found "financial irregularities" in it, staff and councillors are keeping quiet. We must wait 'til October for full details, but it seems a "wad" of finance officers met behind closed doors to draw up their own attractive pension plans — which were approved by the Tories but disapproved of by Labour after the Tories lost the 1994 election.

KENSINGTON & CHELSEA: Traffic wardens have a bad enough image, but when the newly contracted-out wardens in this west London borough appeared in a military-style green uniforms they attracted even harsher remarks than usual. To correct this style error the council, after just a year, is to spend £10,000 of taxpayers' money to change the uniform to friendly navy blue.

LEEDS: While the council has refused to install security cameras or employ fulltime guards at the city's Woodhouse Lane multi-storey car park, the fears of hundreds of women council workers who are forced to use the car park have been realised: recently a young woman was abducted at knifepoint, forced into her car, tied up and sexually assaulted for two hours, and another woman was attacked by a knifeman several days later. And the response of the caring council? It will still not install cameras or employ proper security staff — but it *will* improve lighting and paint the stairs. So that's all right, then.

DERBYSHIRE: The county fire brigade has been so busy in the recent dry spell fighting serious fires in the Peak District National Park that in the first week of August it could not have coped with a serious incident away from the park. To put this right the county council has sensibly put all its full-time firemen at risk of redundancy, blaming the high cost of keeping them fully employed.

HUSBAND

LUVVIES

The meaning of the piece has nothing to do with me. It is entirely in the eye of the beholder. If there is any meaning to it all for me, it is the... can I do it? ... Look, I'm not saying it is meaningless any more than I am saying it is meaningful. And I'm not saying it is meaningful any more than I am saying it is meaningless.

TILDA SWINTON
(telling the *Observer* about The Maybe, a piece of performance art in which she will spend a week next month sleeping in a glass case at London's Serpentine Gallery)

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for similar submissions.

Letters

Evidently not

Sir,

Reference your item under Legal News about complaints to the Bar Council (EYE *878).*

The references to me are almost entirely inaccurate. I did not succeed Cocks as chairman of the Criminal Bar Association. I did not convey any sort of warning from Cocks to Sasha Wass, nor did I, in any way, seek to influence her in relation to her evidence for the disciplinary hearing. I am her head of chambers and I advised her at the outset that she seek independent advice. She has done so.

I have spoken to Thwaites about the disciplinary proceeding because I was informed I was to be subpoenaed on his client's behalf. I am not, nor have I been, anxious about giving evidence. I fear that the source of your article has seriously misled you.

Please do not repeat any of the inaccuracies in your present article.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD FERGUSON QC,
Temple, London EC4.

Up to date

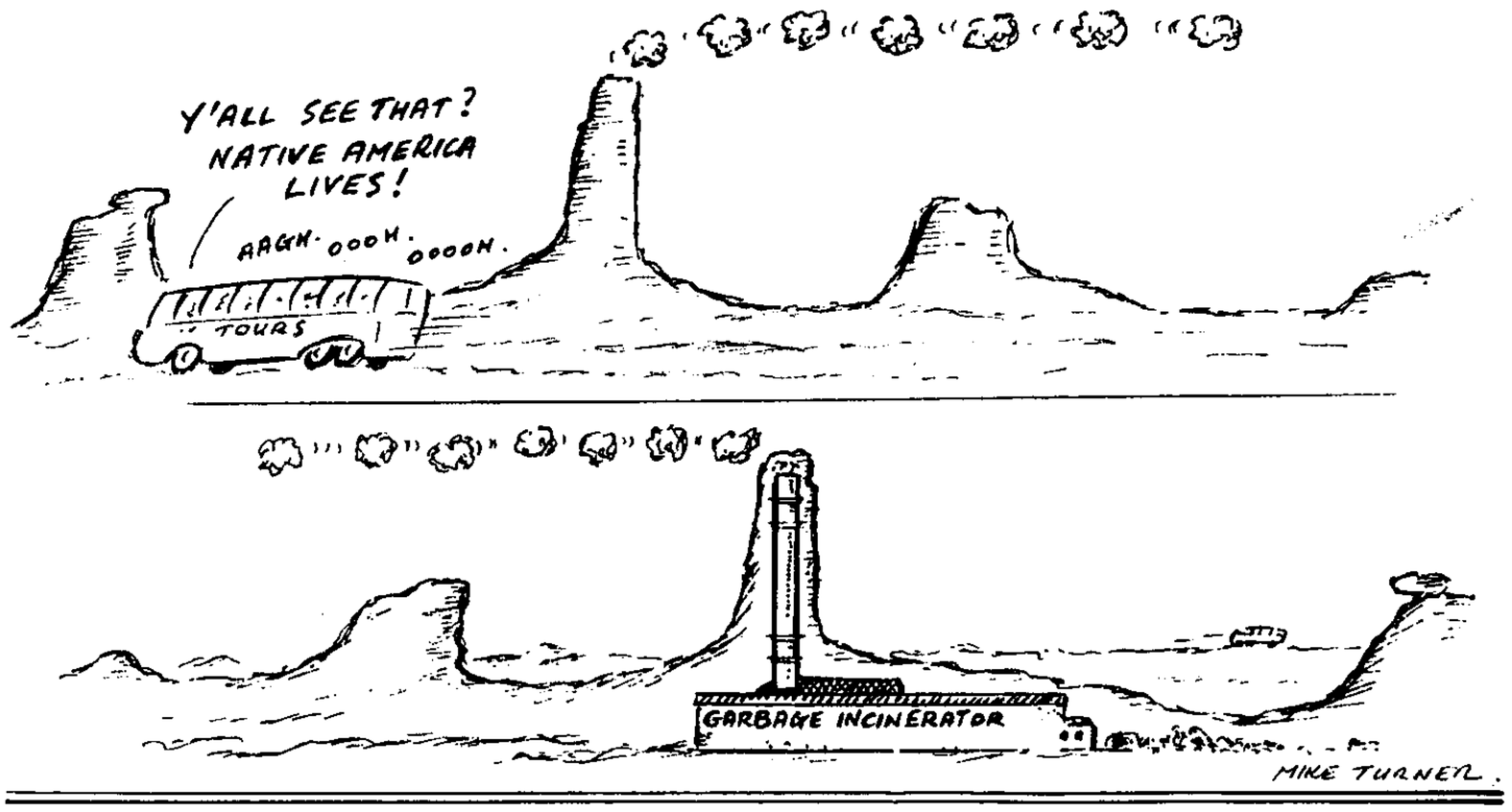
Sir,

The Falklands war was not a problem for me, as I supported it.

Some Serbs have recently harmed us. Ratko Mladic has taken British soldiers hostage and threatened a terrorist campaign in British cities. The tabloid press allege that Crna Ruka, the organisation that carried out the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914, will be the terrorists' nom-de-plume. When British soldiers were taken hostage, Nora Ballsoff wrote to THE TIMES *on 1 June giving Mladic her full support. Since she is a British subject, I would remind her that in 1946 William Joyce was sent to the gallows for less.*

I see those Serbs who fled from the Krajina still have their cars. Muslims who fled from Visegrad, Foca and Prijedov three years ago in cars were relieved of them at the next Chetnik checkpoint and made to complete the journey on foot. The flight from Krajina was not so much "ethnic cleansing" as a Big Skedaddle, rather like France in 1940. Who started the Yugoslav war anyway?

Sincerely,
TOM CARTER,
Somerton, Somerset.



Lookalike

Heseltine **Gargoyle**

Sir,

Does this gargoyle, in the newly opened St Nicholas Gardens, not bear a striking resemblance to Michael Heseltine?

Yours,
N. MACLEOD,
Glasgow.

Double Feature

Sir,

I think I spotted an advert in your last issue for the new Bruce Willis film "Die Hard With A Vest". I was able to identify Mr Willis by his trade-mark singlet, although he does seem to have aged a lot since "Die Hard II". Is the young woman with him Kim Basinger? And could you repeat the advertisement, please, for those of us still unsure whether to go to see the film?

Yours faithfully,
ADAM EDWARDS.

Ooh!

Sir,

I am not surprised that you found pirated, out of context, extracts from our recent BBC Innovation Workshop smacking of "gobbledegook" (EYE *878). Your supercilious snippets confirm my suspicions of strait-jacketed mind-sets and blinkered, analytical tendencies at Gnome Hall.*

Incidentally, those who attended the session you referred to all found our programme to be exceedingly helpful, and we have a long list of impressively hard-nosed business clients whose repeat contracts are a testament to our cost-effectiveness.

Perhaps you would like an incisive needs analysis at PRIVATE EYE, *followed by proposals for freeing up your latent, if somewhat adolescent, creativity — without obligation, of course.*

Yours in anticipation,
DAMIAN DUGGAN-RYAN,
Whitell Ryan Associates (Communication Consultants), London N16.

Extremely unconvincing

Sir,

Thank you for printing the factually incorrect feature headed "You've Been Ad" relating among other issues to the opening of the NYNEX arena Manchester.

"The seating tiers at the top of the auditorium are so steep..."

The seating is less of an angle than the official 35 degrees recommended rate; less of an angle than other similar European facilities; and less of an angle than you would find in arenas and theatres throughout the world.

"Scores of fans left at half-time overcome with vertigo..."

Only 30 of the UK record-breaking attendance of almost 16,000 "put pen to paper" complaining of vertigo — hardly the scores to which you refer.

"...not that there are enough handrails to make their descent easier"

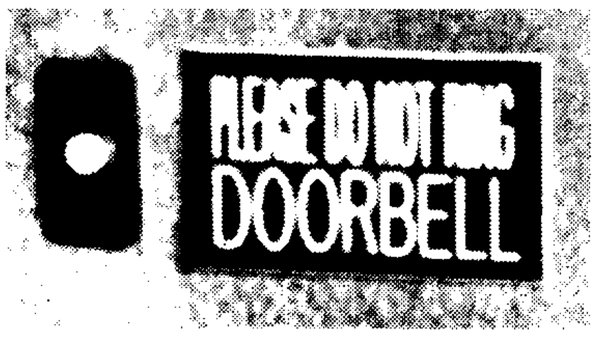
Handrails are affixed throughout the entire second tier level, the number and design of which are strictly governed by the Health & Safety guidelines implemented by the appropriate bodies.

"...Ogdens have thoughtfully designed the car park with one exit..."

Ogden (without the 's') Entertainment Services neither designed the City Centre Manchester Parking on-site, multi-storey car park nor the arena itself.

You conveniently neglect to mention the fact that there are over 7,000 car parking spaces within 500 metres of the arena; that we are adjoining Victoria Station which harbours the UK's first operating light-rail system, Metrolink (another first for Manchester and which already transports over 13 million passengers per year) and acts as a central hub for Regional Railways; and that we, in conjunction with the city council, organised trouble-free parking within easy walking distance of the arena for 67 private coaches.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID R. BIGGAR,
Director of Marketing, Nynex Arena Manchester.



I SPY

Submitted by David Twyk, E.H. Hills.
£10 paid for similar submissions.
(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)

Without prejudice

Sir,

Your burning literary issue of the moment — Jane Austen's sexual identity, or involvement in a "sex slur scandal", as the EXPRESS *put it succinctly — was credited to* THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT *(shurely the* SUN*?) Alas, neither is correct since the perpetrator of the original article was the* LONDON REVIEW OF BOOKS, *who surely deserves to shoulder all the blame.*

Yours in the interest of straight facts,

ANN GENEVA,
London Review Of Books.

PS: Great piece

Last Spanish resort

Sir,

Your clipping from the SUNDAY WORLD *(Dublin) in issue 878 ("It'll be a repeat of yesterday this morning: dull and overcast with the odd Spanish student appearing in all areas") actually makes perfect sense to anyone living in Ireland.*

Thousands of teenage Spanish students migrate to Ireland in the summer months to learn English — sent by parents who presume Ireland to be a suitably safe Catholic country. Although they stay with Irish families, many spend their time hanging around on street corners. The good weather seems to bring them out en masse: my Da says Dun Laoghaire is swarming.

Yours sincerely,
DANIELLE BYRNE,
London SE1.

What nonsense

Sir,

I was surprised to see a supposedly amusing article in your magazine claiming to report the departure of a member of "So What". Clearly you are not aware that "So What" are a real band, which I have managed for the last eight years. I am worried that this satirical report of the departure of one "Whohe" (ha!ha!) may have an adverse effect on my clients' bookings by promoters and their relationship with their dedicated following (on whom we rely).

Accordingly I hope you will print a retraction or correction in your magazine forthwith. If this does not take place I shall be forced to contact my solicitors with a view to legal action (with which I believe you are very familiar).

Yours,
ALAN CRABTREE,
Manager (Slightly Muddy Promotions), Swansea.

Hello again

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the extraordinary resemblance between the Saddam Hussein HALLO! *spoof on the front page of Section 2 of today's* GRAUNIAD *(Tuesday 15 August), and the "At Home with the Husseins" Hello spoof printed in* PRIVATE EYE *many months ago.*

Perhaps someone at the GRIDIRON *reads the* EYE...

Yours faithfully,
TIM BENBOW,
St Antony's College, Oxford.

Lost in time

Sir,

*I would mention that the signpost indicating "Lost" (*EYE *878) has now made its fourth entry in your esteemed organ — at £10 a time, clearly a lucrative if not alluring locality. I think you should also be told, to save further expense, that "Strome Ferry (no ferry)", "Police — Shady Lane" (Watford), and "Jewellery — Hitler & Son Ltd" have also been duplicated in the past.*

Yours faithfully,
RICKY GUNN,
London N21.

Literally Spermanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"The Royal Family could literally be sitting on a gold mine, if the search for oil beneath Windsor Castle proves successful."
London Tonight (Carlton)
(Charlie Catchpole)

"When they go into mass-production the prices will come tumbling down, literally like peas in a pod."
TECHNO-GURU, Radio Five Live
(Paul Connell)

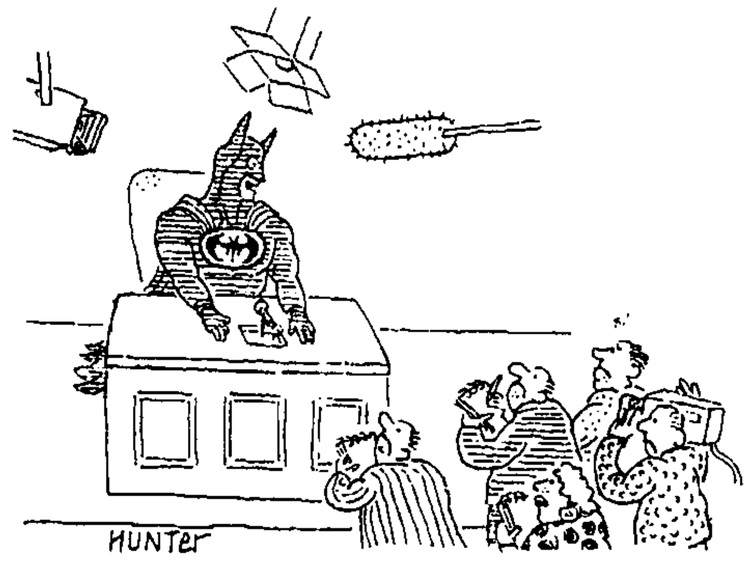
"The ball came back, literally cutting him [Graham Thorpe] in half."
COLIN CROFT, BBC
(Katherine Spalding)

"Tonight, literally getting off his deathbed — Elvis Costello..."
DANNY BAKER
(Brian Williams)

"Nethercott, literally standing in Le Tissier's pocket..."
DAVID PLEAT, Radio Five Live
(P. Arbos)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



*"Of course I **could** go for the Joker's jugular, but how do I know that won't bring in the Riddler and his chums hell-bent on kicking off World War 3?"*

Letter From A Faraway Country Of Which We Know Nothing

from Our Own Correspondent

SO, the invincible Serb forces that were too formidable for the whole western alliance to overcome in four years were vanquished: rolled up in four days by the Ruritanian Croats. Nato taxpayers may wonder what their hard-earned contributions have been paying for all these years.

The Croats were helped of course by the heavy weapons they have been getting despite the arms embargo that is supposed to cover the whole region. Unlike the Bosnians, whom Croatian president Franjo Tudjman has ensured would *not* be well armed when the increasingly ugly Croatian hardliners decide to restart their own ethnic cleansing campaign.

That is why after a day of euphoria the Bosnians began to get worried again. The whole Krijina takeover was so easy it seemed to confirm the rumours of a deal — between Tudjman and the Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic — to carve up Bosnia.

However, when the threat to the long-suffering Bosnians came it was from a completely different quarter: Wobbly Willy Clinton's negotiators, who happily offered up Gorazde as a sweetener to the Serbs with the enthusiastic support of the British and French. These two countries could not only pander to the Serbs as normal, but they could now blame the Yanks for it.

Gorazde, people other than western politicians with short memories may recall, is the Bosnian enclave which Nato, Malcolm Rifkind and Wobbly Willy himself pledged to defend with the full might of Nato. It was symbolic of the new determination to stand up to the Serbs who had just overrun Zepa and Srebrenica. But that was when the White House was trying to head off Bob Dole's vote in congress to lift the arms embargo unilaterally. Typically for a western line in the sand, it was drawn on the beach at low tide.

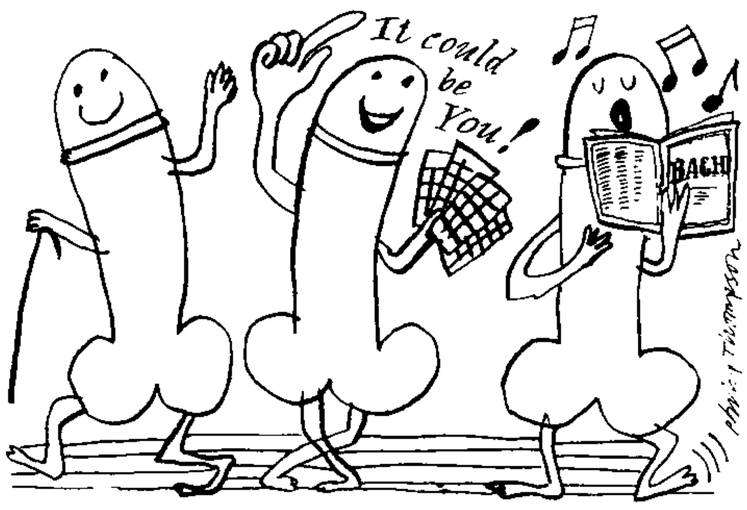
So, apart from the spy satellite evidence the US had showing mass graves with more than 2,000 massacred Bosnians in Srebrenica; and apart from the graphic Croatian proof that the Serbs were a pushover; and apart from the disarray in Pale between Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his partner in war crimes General Ratko Mladic, what impelled Washington to offer up Gorazde for ethnic cleansing?

In a word — reelection. The Bill Clinton who had flown back to Little Rock to supervise the execution of a brain-damaged black convict during his last election campaign would not scruple at offering up a safe haven to get a peace treaty, any peace treaty, before the US congress reassembles after the summer. The only imperative is speed. It has to be achieved before the acerbic Bob Dole can stand on the senate floor and point out the difference between the White House's insistence that the war criminals be punished and its present call for Mladic and his ultimate sponsor in Belgrade, Milosevic, to be rewarded.

11.05 You Decide – with Paxman. Paxman plays devil's apricot *(S) (305844).*

Independent

FUNNY OLD WORLD



COMPILED BY

Victor Lewis-Smith

● "Bruce Jensen is just incredibly naive," prosecutor Bill McGuire informed reporters in Bountiful, Utah. "You've got a situation here where love is unbelievably blind."

McGuire was speaking following the arrest of Jensen's "wife", Felix Urioste, on fraud charges. "The couple got married in 1991, after a single sexual encounter, because Urioste claimed he was pregnant and Jensen felt responsible. After the wedding, he said he'd had a miscarriage, and the marriage was basically celibate after that. Urioste got away with it because Jensen never saw him naked, he was taking female hormones that gave him slight breasts and, on the few occasions when they did have sex, he secretly fashioned a rubber vagina out of a washing machine hose, and placed it between his legs. Even so, he has a thick moustache and beard, and a normal size penis, but Jensen loved his wife and gave her the benefit of the doubt. Things were okay until April, when Urioste disappeared, along with a walletful of credit cards, and Jensen was heartbroken. He's just a little country bumpkin from Wyoming that wouldn't hurt a flea. When we finally arrested Urioste in Las Vegas, he's run up $40,000 in bills. It's a sad story."

Jensen later admitted: "I feel pretty stupid. It trashes you out to believe everything a person says and find out they lied to you on basically 100% of it. The moustache should have given him away, but my mother had one and that was virtually a handlebar. Some women do, you know. I find them quite attractive." *(Eastern Express 15/7/95. Spotter — Dr George Adams)*

—●—

● "I left the *Heavenly Dog Sect* in 1992 after sustaining head injuries, due to an accident involving local militant butchers," Chen Qi-zan declared to Helen Sze during a recent interview. "I realised then that self-awareness could only be attained by focusing one's mind on the penis. This made me realise it was stupid to worship dogs, so I founded the *Penis Worship Sect*."

Standing on one leg, Chen outlined the doctrine of his religion, which has so far met with widespread derision in Taipei. "Men have two minds, one in their heads and one in their genitals. The woman's penis is in the breasts, which have enough strength to lift 1,000kg if harnessed properly. The male penis can lift loads of up to 500kg. I am now practising a feat called *The King's Wonder Power*, for which I have to train my penis for at least six hours a day. It is the kind of feat that should only be attempted by people with strong minds, because you will lose your balance and harmony if you try this before you are ready. When you reach the highest level, the penis can walk, talk, even sing on its own. It will tell you your fortune. I have had two winning lottery tickets during the past year, after following the guidance of my divine penis."

After a pause, Chen continued: "There are few people who have the courage to declare in public that they worship penises. My friends, do not be afraid. In the future, those who harness this power will rule the world." *(Eastweek (Hong Kong) 26/7/95. Spotter — Rob Farrer-Brown)*

—●—

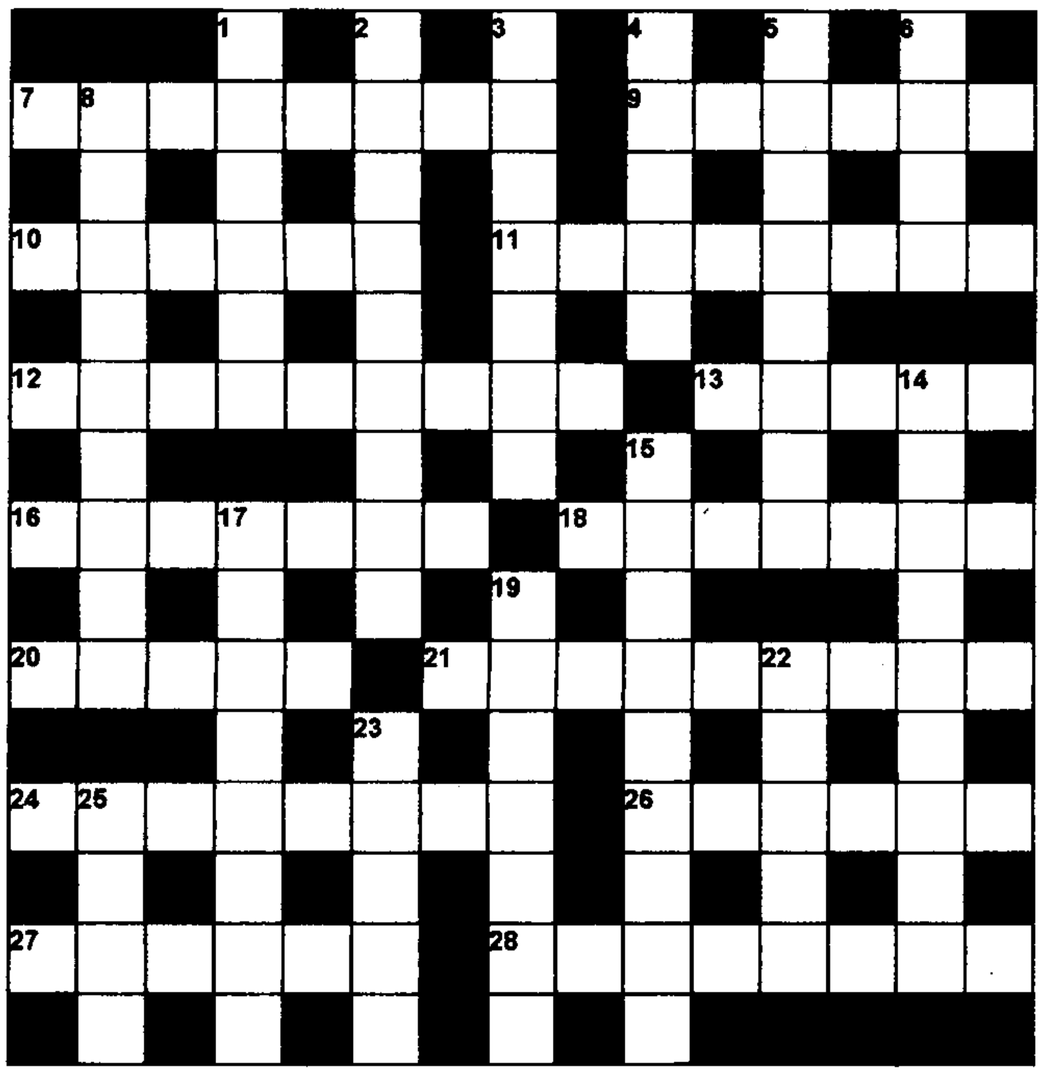
● *"Deep in Kamuli district," Deo Siminyu told readers of the Uganda Monitor, "in Bugaya subcountry, a wizard who was recently beaten to death sent everyone into disarray when he resurrected at his burial.*

"It all started when the witch was found by a neighbour frying groundnuts, using the hand of a corpse instead of a frying pan. This infuriated the neighbour who, like many others in the village, had feasted on the wizard's groundnuts. Amid screams, he tried to strangle the wizard. Other villagers soon appeared, and they ganged up and beat the wizard to death.

"But three days later, as he was being laid in his grave, his voice was heard emanating from the coffin saying 'You killers, give me back my groundnuts.' The terrified villagers opened the lid, and found the wizard was alive, with eyes wide open and an angry look about him. They ran off, but for fear of misfortune all the villagers who had participated in the killing later appeased him with a male goat each. The wizard has since left the village and was last seen in Kampala, where he is operating a roadside hamburger caravan." (Uganda Monitor, 20/5/95. Spotter — Nigel Marsh)

EYE CROSSWORD 35 by Cyclops

£100 Winner PATRICK WATERFIELD



ACROSS

7 Neglected real duty — the sin of many a govermnent minister? (8)
9 War and tragedy sums up this trouble spot (6)
10/24 Conservatives who tacitly support our dumb PM with much sorrow? (6,8)
11 Call for male tennis players to get knackered again? (3,5)
12 Naff tv forecaster having a ball (6,3)
13 A sector, it's said, which the UN fails to keep (5)
16 Lab/Con shindigs? (7)
18 Sexually ambivalent? Time to get into bloody sexism and the like (7)
20 Filthy lucre's a very sore point (5)
21 Making a sexual statement as Liz Hurley was of *that* dress? (6,3)
24 (see 10)
26 'New' Church of England shortly to be involved in gay movement operation (6)
27 Victoria wasn't terribly mad about being handled (6)
28 North East held by one-time Conservative lawyer (8)

DOWN

1 Unsavoury Hollywood role for Hugh Grant, taking a different line in court (6)
2 Try to get deceptive slice on balls (9)
3 Where you'll find the odd cheeky beggar amongst our smalls (3,4)
4 Money no longer carried by royal nut (5)
5 Fergie less hot, by Jove, touring besieged city (8)
6 Eric's said to be the object of adoring fans (4)
8 A 19 for the regular bloke, we hear (5,4)
14 Princely word for a despised erection? (9)
15 Policeman unofficially makes a living by alien relocation (9)
17 Where members can be seen getting hard inside an eastern flower (3,5)
19 Right-angled paper (4,3)
22 Unlikely feminist basher, some agree, rancorously (5)
23 Another name for Thatcher's child allowance revelation (5)
25 Shifty Mark's to let go a thousand such destructive items? (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 01.09.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 34

ACROSS: 7 (See 9) 8 Riot gear 10 Bullshit 11 Parody 12/22 Marmaduke Hussey 14 Grade 16 Walpole 18 Have sex 20 Board 21 Whitehall 24 Ulster 25 Pollster 27 Phonetap 28 Needle.

DOWN: 1 Urdu 2 Asylum 3 On the dole 4 Trotsky 5 Soaps 6 Padded cell 9/7 Gartree Prison 13 Ayatollahs 15 Party line 17 Puritan 19 The Pope 22 (See 12) 23 Trots 26 Elle.

TORIES HAIL UNEMPLOYMENT TRIUMPH

By Our Economics correspondent
Sir Peter Jay Bottomingout

GOOD news at last for the Conservative Party came last night in the form of the latest unemployment figures showing "a small but significant increase" in the number of unemployed.

"It's what we have been waiting for," said a tired but triumphant Chancellor Kenneth Clark. "This is definite proof that the recovery is over. Now I don't have to raise interest rates and we can all enjoy the feelgood factor — except the two million unemployed, obviously.

"Still," he continued, "they can enjoy the hot weather since they are at home all day, so that's all right."

Dr Brian Morelooney is 48.

Edinburgh Highlights

(reprinted from all newspapers)

Pick of the Festival

DANCE

The Nogud Dancers of Rumbabwe continue to thrill audiences with their eclectic mix of jazz, skiffle and African wrestling. The Charles Moore Hall, 11pm (venue No. 748).

ART

The Edinburgh Tattoo. Collection of tattoos with their owners in exhibition of contemporary skin calligraphy. Artists include Alf, Mac, Jimmy of Camden and George Melly. Scottish National Gallery (venue no. 8,317).

THEATRE

New one-man show by Simon Gray, *Come Fry With Me*, tells story of useless dramatist sitting in Groucho Club droning on about how Stephen Fry ruined his life. Starring Simon Gray. The Old Luvvies Arms, 4 am (venue no. 136,702).

FILM

Dirt. Much-acclaimed docu-drama by director Ken Spart about a Durham miner dying of AIDS because of Mrs Thatcher (Winner of the Palme D'Or at Warsaw Filmfog 95). Starring Lily Savage as Mrs Thatcher and 2,000 real Durham miners as themselves. The Caledonian Gaumont, 12.00 am (venue no. 789,402).

Pick of the Fringe

COMEDY

Barnstorming double-act from BBC2's cult hit show, *No One's Watching!* Amanda Ianogood and her zany husband Armani Ianewsuit do their famous Star Trek sketch and poke fun at TV adverts! The Gilded Ballsroom (venue No. 1).

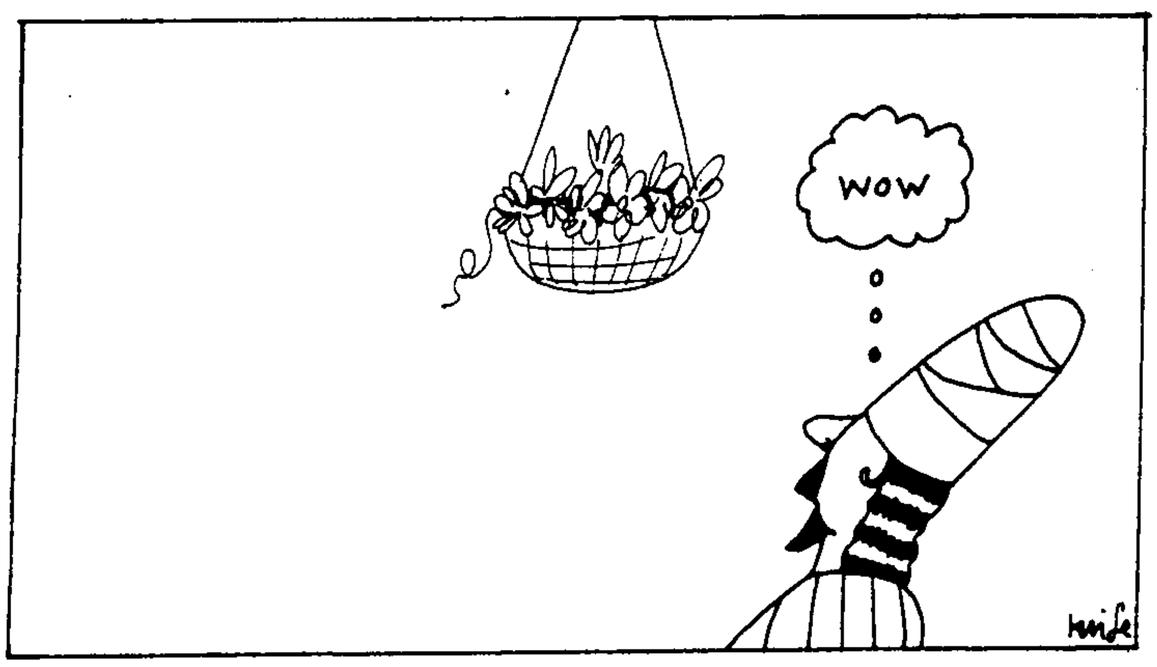
STUDENT

The University of Oxford (Cowley), formerly the British Leyland works, present an all-female version of Aristophanes' "The Gerbils" with new music specially composed by Sir Harrison Thompson-Whistle. St Meldrew's Church, 2.30 p.m (venue no. 1,737,402).

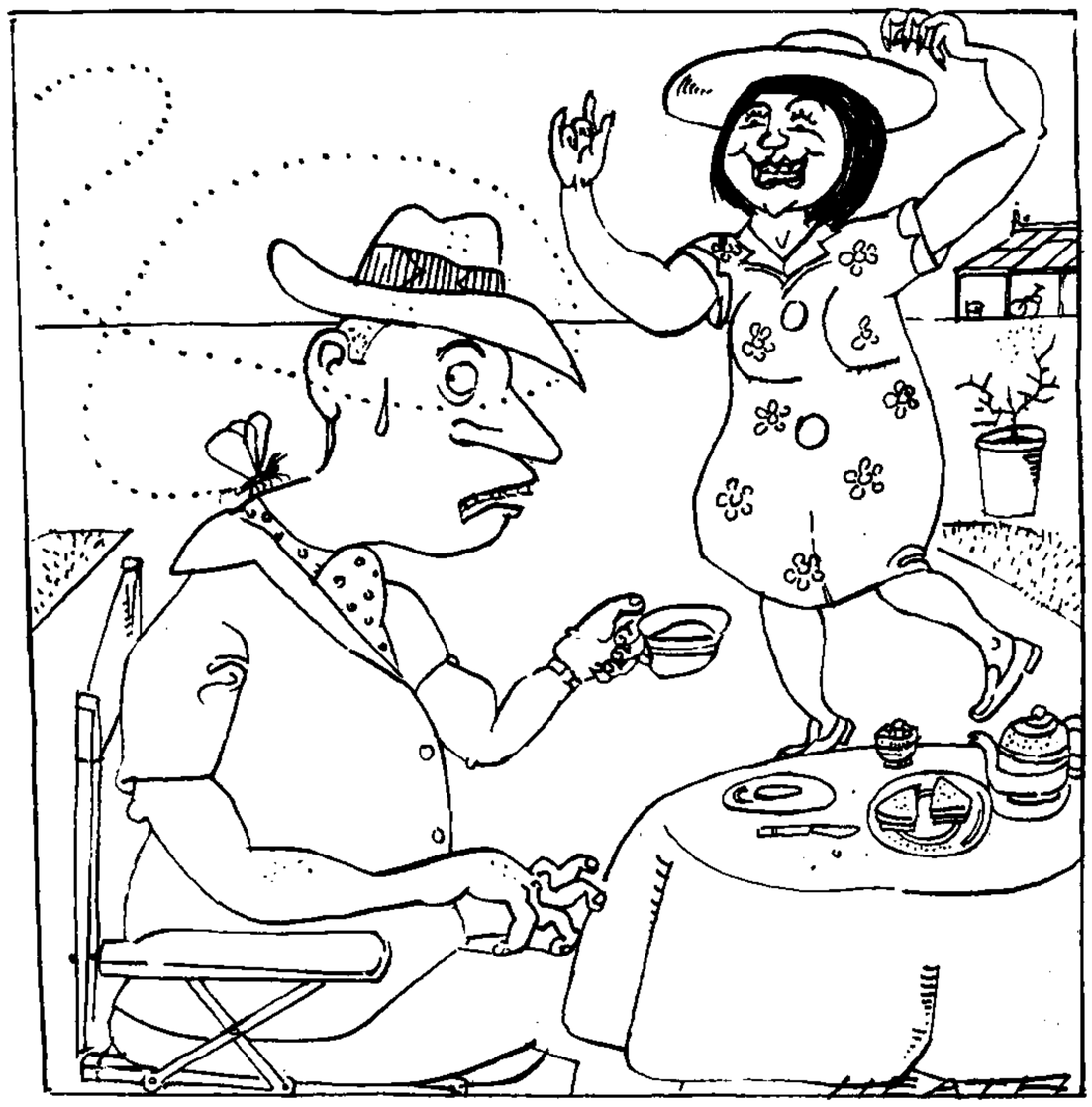
PHOTOGRAPHY

Searing still-life studies of recently deceased car-crash victims by American photorealist Conrad Z. Sikko. "Astonishing," *The New Yorker.*

(That's enough Edinburgh. Ed)



THE HANGING BASKET OF BABYLON



Great Bores Of Today.

"... don't move don't move the worst thing you can do is make a sudden movement keep completely still if you flap your arms around it will sting you watch out now it's on your neck just leave it alone and it will fly away don't make it angry it's more scared of you than you are of it stay calm it's just a household wasp not one of those continental ones it won't kill you it's only after the sugar in your tea have you got aftershave on? they love that don't they? don't move don't move I've never in all my life been stung by a wasp and I'll tell you why... yoww!"

GNOME LEISURE INC

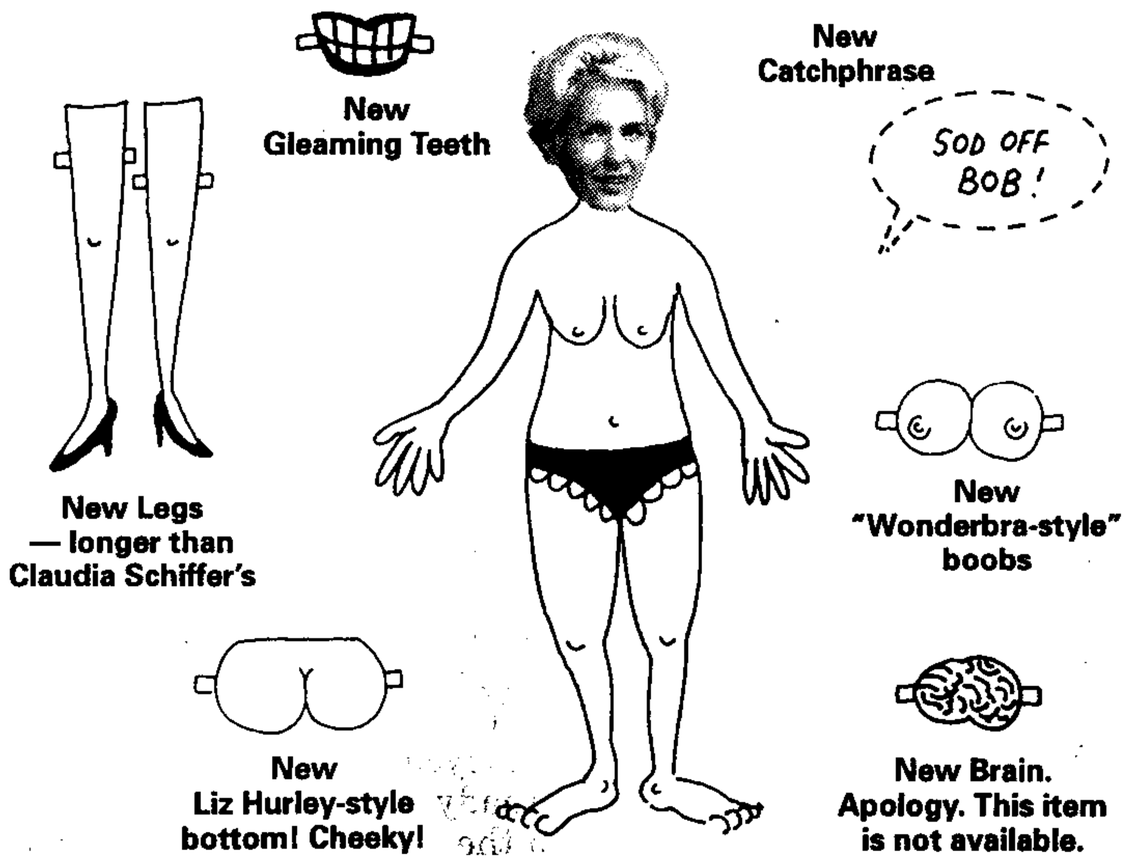
(Slags 'R' Us)

MAKE YOUR OWN PAULA YATES™

All the fun of the cosmetic surgeon in your own front room!

Paula is just waiting for you to turn her from a plain middle-aged housewife into a dazzling superbabe as seen in *Hello!*

Simply cut out the accessories and stick them on with superglue! It's what she did!!


New Gleaming Teeth
New Catchphrase
SOD OFF BOB!
New Legs — longer than Claudia Schiffer's
New "Wonderbra-style" boobs
New Liz Hurley-style bottom! Cheeky!
New Brain. Apology. This item is not available.

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

My wife Norman and I are still on our holiday in France. We are definitely relaxing and not thinking about any of the following at all:

Mr Heseltine.

Mr Blair.

Mr Redwood.

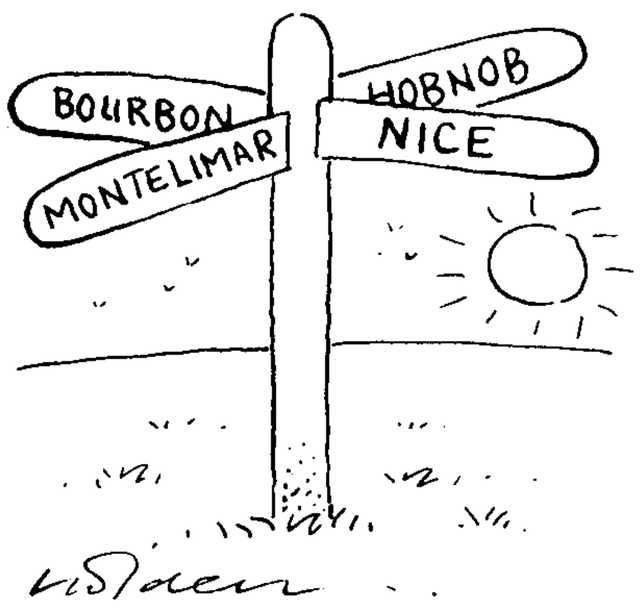
My brother Terry.

Mrs Thatcher.

All the other Bastards.

Oh no.

Today we are at a very nice place called Nice. You see, the French even use English words for their towns, which shows how wrong the Euro-sceptics are about them. They have even called this part of France



the Riviera, after the famous Cornish Riviera, and the main street is called the Promenade of the English, which shows just how at the heart of Europe we are and always have been. Oh yes.

Tuesday

Today my office in London rang me to say that they were faxing me a very historic letter which had arrived from Mr Phuwotascorcha, who is this week's prime minister of Japan. I went down to the hotel fax machine, which is next to the swimming pool, to receive this very important document in person.

Unfortunately it was being read by a large German man who was laughing out loud and showing it to his wife. I was in no small measure very annoyed as this particular couple had already taken my sun-lounger earlier in the day. When I finally got the fax back, this is what it read:

Honourable Prime Minister,

We would like to salute you on your historic victory over despicable traitor John Ledwood. May we take this opportunity also to convey our deepest condolences over your country's recent failure to win the cricket match over the West Indies. We in Japan know what it is like to be cheated of much-deserved victory at the last minute owing to circumstances beyond our control. Geddit?

Your infinitely humble and obedient superior,

N. PHUWOTASCORCHA

There was a little note with this letter from Mr Rifkind which said:

"Great news, John. This is the nearest to a full apology for the war we're ever going to get. You've pulled off a real triumph here. Better than anything Mrs Thatcher ever did. Michael says you should stay on holiday a couple of weeks longer to celebrate. He will hold the fort."

Wednesday

I do not know whether to be very not inconsiderably annoyed or quite not inconsiderably pleased. This morning I saw on the hotel's CNN News that no sooner have I turned my back then the great economic recovery has come to an end. This only goes to show how wrong I was to leave Mr Heseltine in charge. According to Ted Bruback and Barbara Freephone, the presenters of CNN's *Good Morning Globe* show, there has been a rise in Britain's unemployment.

"That is only because you sacked Mr Redwood, Mr Hanley and those others," said my wife Norman. For once she may have got it right. This small increase is only a temporary blip caused by seasonal factors — ie my reshuffle and Mr Gummer's drought — and everything will soon be back to normal.

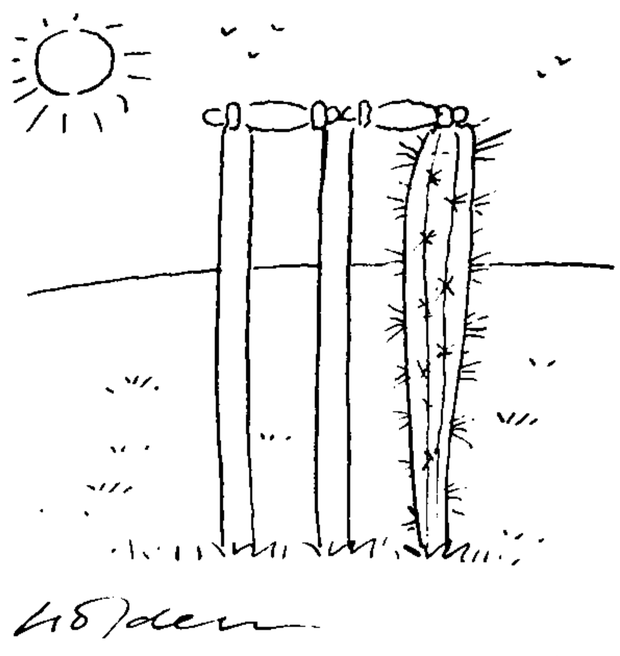
Thursday

I am extremely pleased with my new Chairman of the Party, Mr Mawhinney. I have at last managed to find a copy of last week's *Daily Telegraph* to read about the test score,

and I was delighted to see on the front page, next to a picture of Miss Hurley, that Mr Mawhinney has really got Mr Blair on the ropes. Instead of just sitting around doing the crossword like Mr Hanley, he has discovered a Labour council somewhere in the North of England who have wasted huge amounts of taxpayers' money erecting a statue of a hippopotamus. This is the kind of thing which will win us the next election. Oh yes. I am sure that in the months to come Mr Mawhinney will find more statues in other towns, perhaps of other animals.

Friday

This morning I set my alarm clock for 4.30 a.m. to be sure of getting to the sunlounger before our fat German friend. Norman was not amused. "Why are you suddenly so keen to beat the Germans?" she snapped. "Normally you do whatever they say." Unfortunately when I got to the pool I found that Mr Herr Wurst-Thurn was already there. "Ach, guten morgen, Herr Major," he



said, with a smile. "So, ze early bird fails to catch ze worm." I was in no small measure annoyed and went back to my room to watch the CNN Early Morning News with Phil and Janine. They said that the Japanese prime minister's letter to me had not been meant to be an apology at all, but only a letter to Mr Heseltine congratulating him on becoming prime minister.

Sunday

I decided that today would be a very historic day when I would finally outwit Herr Wurst-Thurn by getting to the sun-lounger at 1 o'clock in the morning. Imagine my in no small measure surprise when I discovered my German friend already on the lounger, reading a very fat book called *Der Jeffrey Archer Omnibus bei der Englischer Meistergeschicktespieler J.Archole, Schreiber von Keine Ein Pfennig Mehr, Zwolf Rote Heringen und alte meisterwerke*. Once again I was forced to return to my room to watch Bill and Jodie presenting Midnight News Plus, Live From Atlanta. They said that the Japanese prime minister had apologised again, properly this time. They also said that: "British premier Heseltine had welcomed the apology and thanked the Japanese people for their courage, honesty and car factories."

SOCCER SEASON 95/96

FOREIGN TALENT TO REVIVE ENGLISH FOOTBALL

THERE is to be a new look Neasden FC. That's official.

When referee Sid Himmler blows his whistle for match one of the Neasden Relegation Division next Saturday, not a single member of the squad will be able to speak English.

For the first time ever, all eleven players will have come from foreign clubs, bought by the ashen-faced mastermind Ron Knee during the close season (August 7th-9th).

Avanti Neasden!

No longer will one-legged net minder Wally Foot pick the ball out of the back of the net. Now it will be the job of Greek veteran Odysseus Christodoulu, 48. In midfield, Baldy Pevsner's coveted Number Five shirt will belong to the Italian legend Gino Ginelli, 63. Into the forward line step Rumanian striker Eugene Ionesco, 78, Hans Rastafarian Anderson, 92, and China's greatest-ever sweeper, Eddie Wong, 103.

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man On The Terraces With The Holsten Pils Lager Ice Cream And The Takeaway Menu For The New Neasden Balti House

But the fans (Sid and Doris Fascist) have yet to be convinced that Knee's summer signings will give Neasden the extra lift it needs. Said Sid: "What is the use of me shouting 'You stupid bastard!' at someone who cannot understand what I am saying?"

LATE SCORE

North Circular Relegation League

AFC Neasden 0

Dollis Hill 24

(Cambazola 3, Souvlaki S. 4, Køhl 4, Shostakovich 3, Souvlaki C. 5, Oranjeeboom 4, Gingrich 1)

How I'm Going To Change Britain

Redwood's 5-Point Plan
(produced in association with the John Redwood Foundation For Advanced Conservative Philosophy)

1. Single mothers? String 'em up.

2. How to slash billions off the budget? Shoot the unemployed.

3. Europe? Sod off, Delors.

4. Queen Mother — don'tcha love her?

5. Law and order. String 'em all up.

6. John Major — aren'tcha sick of him?

© J. Redwood, Fellow of All Souls (Cab No. 1815)

IRAQ – Latest

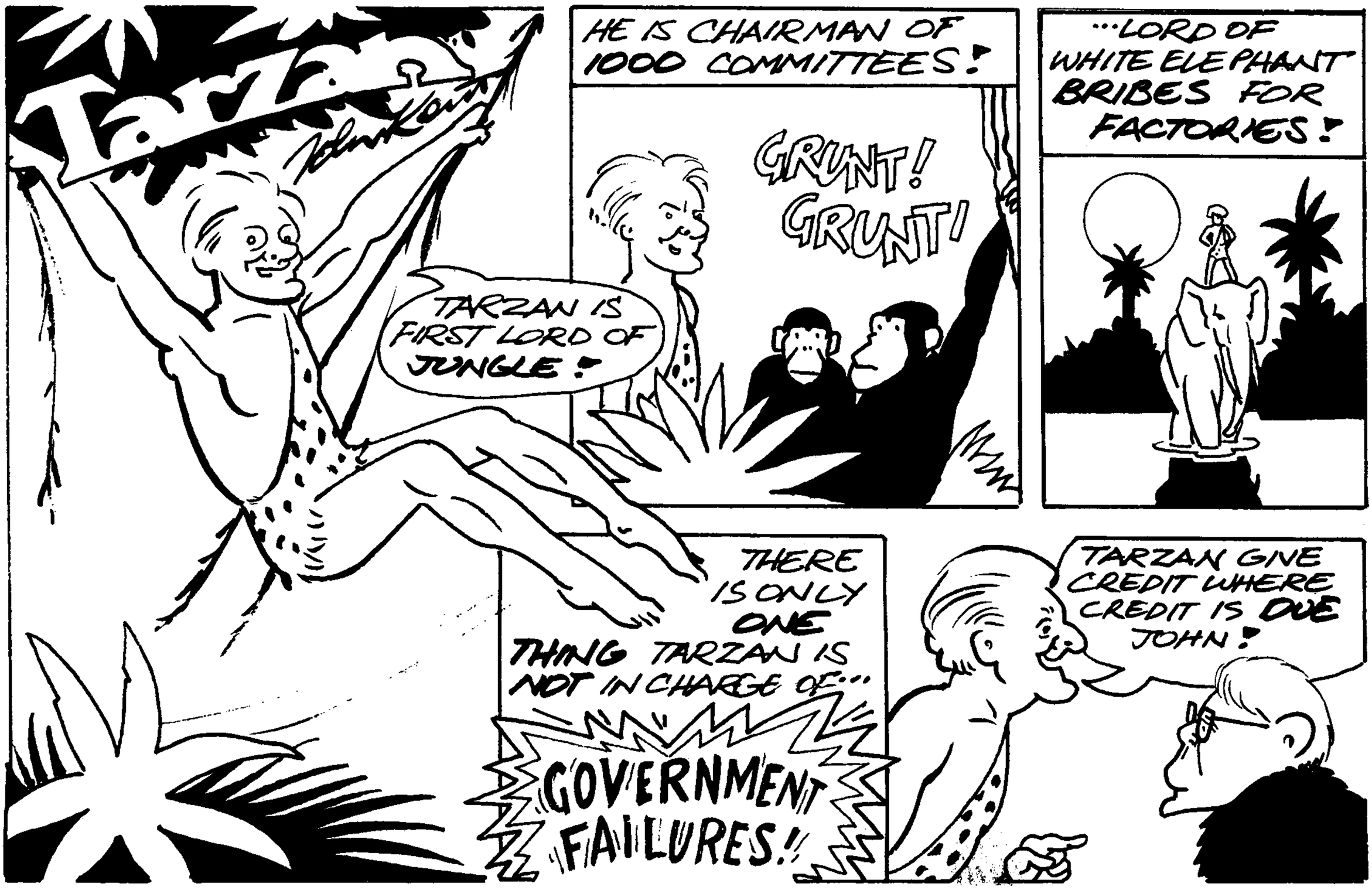
by Our Arms Staff
Winston Matrix-Churchill

A NEW row erupted last night over the government's controversial plans to supply new family members to Saddam Hussein.

These "supersons", as they are known, are intended to replace the two high-powered defectors that the Iraqi dictator has recently lost.

Said a government spokesman: "There is nothing exceptional or irregular in this deal. Saddam needs these 'sons' and we are in a very strong position to fulfil any orders he might care to put in."

Mark Thatcher is 42.


T.V.C. John Kent
TARZAN IS FIRST LORD OF JUNGLE!
HE IS CHAIRMAN OF 1000 COMMITTEES!
GRUNT! GRUNT!
...LORD OF WHITE ELEPHANT BRIBES FOR FACTORIES!
THERE IS ONLY ONE THING TARZAN IS NOT IN CHARGE OF...
GOVERNMENT FAILURES!!
TARZAN GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE JOHN!

Daily Mail
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 35p
FRIDAY, AUGUST 25, 1995

IS THIS THE END FOR BLAIR?

Labour Revolt Grows

By Our Political Staff A. Liar

LABOUR leader Tony Blair was last night reeling under yet another savage assault from his own party, prompting Westminster insiders to predict that he will be lucky to win a single seat at the next election. *(This is good stuff — Lord Rothermere, prop.)*

The latest blow to Blair's tottering leadership came in a blistering broadside from a highly-respected West Midlands councillor, Ron Grobb, interviewed on the influential radio programme *Good Morning Stoke-on-Trent.*

Speaking to DJ Kevin Snazz, Mr Grobb, 57, said: "Sometimes I wonder whether Tony Blair really knows what's going on in Stoke-on-Trent."

Vote Conservative

Mr Grobb's astonishing outburst follows a series of hammerblows which have left Blair dazed and on the ropes, waiting only for the final knockout which will be delivered by John Major at the next election. *(Brilliant. Take a pay rise — Lord R.)*

This is the amazing sequence of events which have made the past fortnight "The Ten Days That Shook Blair's World" and left him reeling against the ropes *(We've had that — pay rise withdrawn. LR.)*

● August 1. ***Daily Mail*** **reveals that Labour elder statesman Roy Hattersley doesn't like Tony Blair very much.**

● August 3. Leading Labour backbencher Eric Spittle, MP for Dunwoody East, writes in the widely-read journal of the Firefighter's Union *Fires and Firemen*: **"It could be argued that the centralising tendency in Blair's strategy will prove counter-productive in some circumstances."**

● August 10. ***Daily Mail*** **reveals that top Blair aide Peter Moustache spent his holiday in the nobs' paradise of Tuscany.**

● An independent poll commissioned by the ***Daily Mail*** **reveals that a staggering 100% of people in the offices of Associated Newspapers think that Blair is "finished as a political force" and that he should "resign at once".**

● Er...

● Ron Grobb, a rising star in West Midlands local government circles, attacks Blair for being out of touch with the grass roots.

Don't Vote Labour

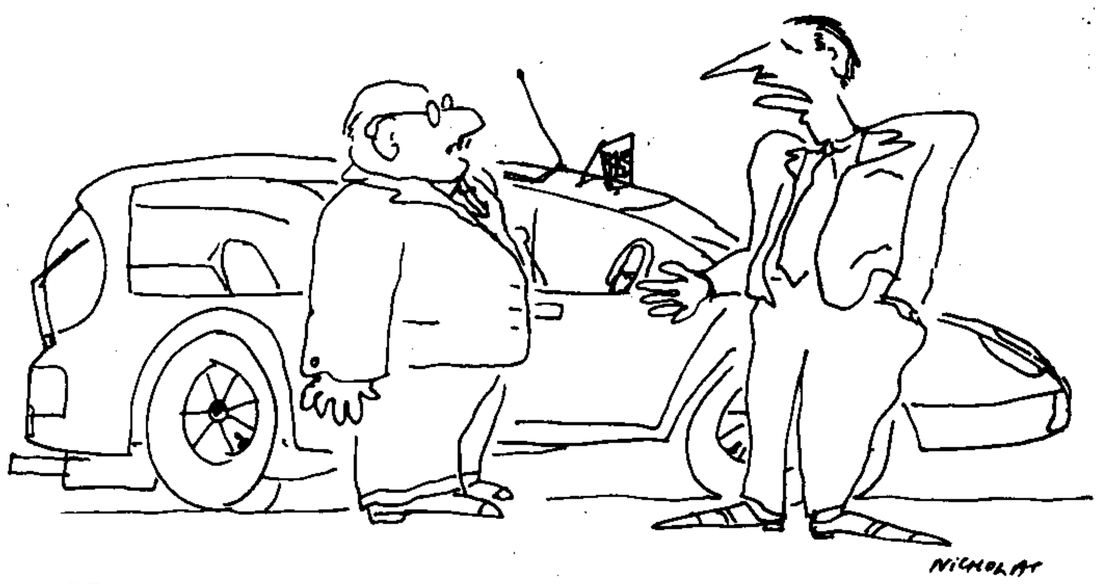
Make no mistake — the so-called Blair honeymoon is dead and buried.

The Labour Party is exposed for what it has always been — a group of loony leftists feuding amongst themselves while the Conservative government gets on with the job of giving this country the kind of leadership it deserves.

INSIDE: 'I Agree That Labour Is Hopeless Now That I'm Not In It Any More Either' by Gerald Kaufman 8, 'It's Too Hot And Blair's To Blame, says Britain's Voice Of Controversy B. Pad 11, Unfunny Blair cartoon by Mac 42

That Japanese PM's 謝 Apology In Full 罪

AT A certain period in Japanese history (which is not taught in schools due to lack of time in the curriculum) certain unfortunate events took place which so far as the Japanese people were concerned were in a mistaken direction, leading to regrettable consequences which particularly affected our fellow Asians and which, in the light of history (sadly not taught in Japanese schools owing to a shortage of textbooks) may now be regarded as not the kind of thing which we would wish to happen again, constituting as they do a continuing cause of misunderstanding amongst our European friends, especially those who were our guests at the relevant period, those, that is, who are still alive, and *(continued for 94 pages).*



"Six-speaker stereo, sunroof, twin air bags, power steering, and when you open the door it says sorry."

THE SUN SAYS

THERE is only one apology our boys will accept from the Japs.

That is the mass hari-kiri of every Japanese male over 50.

So hari up, Nips. And our readers will supply the swords.

Send your money now to SUN Send-A-Sword and we'll provide the Nips with the ideal way to celebrate VJ Day.

Tick the box to show where you want Johnny Jap to stick his Sun sword:

☐ **In his belly**

☐ **Down his throat**

☐ **Up his bum**

Evening Standard An Apology

MR STEWART Steven, Emperor *(shurely 'Editor'?)* of the *Evening Standard*, tonight went on worldwide television to acknowledge his "deep feelings of regret" over "certain events which have taken place in the recent past". Mr Steven went on to admit that "serious errors" had led his newspaper into a "mistaken course" in publishing an article contributed by a teenage student under the name of Mr Brian Gould. Mr Steven explained that "certain people" in his office were "guilty of outrageous crimes" which had "shocked the conscience of the world" and promised that a full, top-level inquiry would be held to establish that he himself had been in no way responsible for World War Two *(shurely 'fax error'? Ed)*.

Those Gould Articles In Full

Article A, published under the headline "Now Gould Lashes Blair In Astonishing Attack Which Could Win The Tories The Next Election"

AS THE teenage son of a Tory Cabinet Minister, I am too young to remember just how awful the Labour party is. But now that I have finished my A Levels in Politics and Media Studies, I realise that Tony Blair is utterly useless and is nowhere near as good as my pater Michael Howard, who incidentally I think should be the next prime minister.

PS. I would very much like a job on the *Evening News*. Is this article the kind of thing you like to print?

PPS. My journalistic hero is your columnist Peter McKay. He is really brilliant. Yours sincerely, Kevin Howard, aged 17½.

Article B, which did not appear owing to a malfunctioning of the fail-safe mechanisms in the editor's brain, was headed "Tony's Doing A Fantastic Job by Brian Gould"

MAKE no mistake, Tony Blair is the best thing that's happened to the Labour Party since I went back to New Zealand.

Sure, Tony has had a few problems and there have been some decisions I don't agree with. But no matter. He is going to be prime minister, that is for certain. Labour will sweep into power at the next election, and all thanks to Tony's courage, guts and vision. Hats off to him.

PS: Will this do? Please send cheque to B. Gould, PO Box 2136, New Halloran, Lomu, NZ.

Stewart Steven, Editor of the *Standard*, writes: "Readers will understand from the above articles just why it was so easy for my highly-trained staff to assume that article A was the work of Mr Gould. When we published it, owing to an unforgiveable error by someone else, we did so in good faith and with absolutely no intention of maligning Mr Blair or the Labour Party."

"Bloody triple queue jumpers!"

A SILVIE KRIN SPECIAL

DIANA – Hunter of Men

THE white-tiled walls of the shower room echoed to the lusty refrain of fifteen full-throated English rugby internationals.

"I love a dumb blonde,
A girl who's not too clever.
And I'm going to show her
The biggest tackle ever."

Will Carling, the handsome England captain, soaped his well-built figure, threw back his head and laughed aloud.

This was the life he knew and loved — to be with the lads after a hard training session. The camaraderie, the male-bonding, the sense of well-being.

Not yet thirty, he felt at the peak of physical fitness. He towelled himself dry and splashed his torso liberally with pine-scented "Gazza Pour Homme". He flexed his muscles and took a good look in the mirror. No wonder the world's most beautiful woman had rung him 32 times that morning.

And that would probably be her again now on the mobile phone.

"In the shower, eh? I like the sound of that," purred the familiar voice of the Princess of Wales.

"Well, just out of the shower actually. I've got a towel round me." He looked nervously over his shoulder, but his team-mates were still preoccupied trying to push the new prop forward head-first down the toilet.

"Can you talk, Scrummy-Bummy?" she asked.

"Yah. Sure. I'm not at home or anything."

There was a slight pause, and then Diana asked coyly: "And what about *my* nickname — or have you forgotten?"

The muscled sportsman crouched defensively behind his locker door and whispered: "Er... Yummy-Tummy."

"Say it louder," she ordered in that half-joking, half-flirting, half-imperious *(That's enough 'halfs'. Ed)* way that was hers and hers alone. It was as if a bolt of lightning had charged down his spine.

"Yummy-Tummy," he repeated.

"Even louder!" she commanded.

"YUMMY-TUMMY!" he yelled, his voice cracking with a mixture of desire and longing.

The room was suddenly quiet and the captain realised that his colleagues had stopped their horseplay and were all staring at him with wide grins spread across their rugged features.

As he tried to hide the phone, they all began to josh him, repeating the words "Yummy Tummy" in silly braying voices.

Then, unbidden, at the back a deep baritone began a chorus which was taken up by the whole team as they ceremoniously carried Carling naked into

the car park and locked him out:

"Swing low! Sweet Will-i-a-am,
Comin' for to carry Di home..."

"AT LAST! I'm glad you finally made it." The tall svelte woman in the low-cut black Hirohito designer mini-dress left a pregnant pause. "Make yourself comfortable."

Carling sat down on the purple velvet chaise-longue as bidden and looked around the opulent Knopfler Suite at Kensington Palace. On the walls were framed photographs of young men he vaguely recognised carrying mobile phones. Each bore a signature followed by kisses. What was that one? Squidgy... Mr Floppy... Ovalteeny-Weeny...

The Princess of Wales sat down next to him and placed her hand on his well-proportioned thigh.

"My goodness!" she said, batting her immaculate eyelids. "You *are* fit, aren't you?"

Carling coughed. "Well, you know, I... er... work out down the club and all that stuff."

Diana smiled knowingly. "And do you do any other sort of exercise?" There was a long and intimate silence and the lights seemed to be dimming.

"Well, my wife and I quite often go for walks with the dog, you know..."

"Oh yes. Your wife. I don't think we want to talk about her, do we... Scrummy-Bummy?"

"SCRUMMY-BUMMY, eh!" The England rugby hero's wife held up a copy of the *News of the World*. "So *this* is the sort of training you get up to, is it?"

She threw the paper on the floor and before he could muster a defence continued: "Well, let me tell you, Scummy-Dummy, if you so much as *talk* to that woman again you are dead. Do you understand?"

Carling stood cowering before this relentless tirade and wished with his heart that he was facing not the diminutive figure of his petite wife but a hundred Jonah Lomus running at him at the speed of an express train.

Suddenly his world had collapsed. From being the man who had it all, he now felt little more than a chastened child barely able to even splutter an apology for the stolen apple found in his blazer pocket.

"I was just naive," he found himself saying. "I didn't realise... I... I..."

The phone on the table next to the trophy cabinet began to ring, cutting him short. He and his wife both stared at it, their reflections in the cabinet's glass staring back at them in sullen judgement.

"Let it ring," Mrs Carling ordered as his hand moved instinctively towards it. Two more rings. Then the phone stopped and the answering machine took over.

"Hello. This is Julia Carling. Neither Will or I are here to take your call right now. If it's about business, please ring the office on 0171-673 7557. If it's you, you miserable bitch, stay away from my husband or you'll be posing for *Hello!* with no teeth. Understand? Thank you for calling. Please speak after the tone."

But no one spoke. The phone clicked and the line went dead. In the depths of Kensington Palace a blonde woman picked up a rugby ball and threw it as hard as she could at a 17th century Louis Armstrong Mirroir. The glass shattered, like so many of her dreams, into a thousand useless pieces.

(To be continued)

DRINK YOUR OWN URINE

Gummer's Shock Plea

by Our Water Staff
Hugh Water-Scorcher

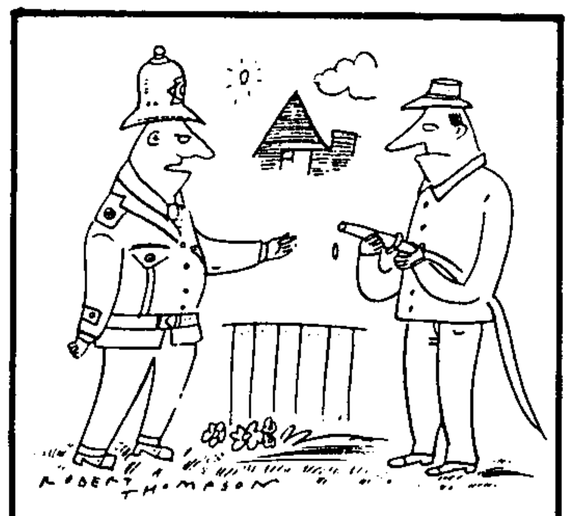
ENVIRONMENT minister John Gummer yesterday praised Britain's water companies for their "superb management" of water supplies in the current drought.

"The newly privatised companies," said Mr Gumboot, "have achieved all that we could have hoped for. They have managed to sell all their water, and it's still only August!"

Gummer Time And The Lying Is Easy

Standing in an empty reservoir near his East Anglia home, Mr Gummer lashed out at "greedy" water customers, who "took all there was and still wanted more".

Said the angry minister: "These people never know when to stop. They think that water is just something that comes out of a tap.



"Come on, sonny, don't do anything stupid — just give me the hosepipe nice 'n' slowly"

"If these waterhogs want unlimited supplies they should provide the water themselves from their own resources."

Mr Gummer stressed that, so long as it complied with EU quality standards, urine was "ideal" for the following purposes:

- **drinking**
- **washing the car**
- **watering the marrows**
- **boiling rice**

Water Chief Demands Standpipe Order

MR REGINALD "Reg" Gusher, the £586,000 a year boss of Water North East, last night demanded that the government should erect standpipes in every house to keep Britain's homes supplied with water through the drought.

"It is not the job of the water companies," he said, "to go round filling reservoirs with water.

"It is our job to build hotels and leisure complexes, and then to send out very large bills to our customers.

"The government should divert the river Thames immediately to my 2000-acre front garden which has been utterly devastated by their callous failure to act."

Asked why his company had done nothing to stop billions of gallons of water leaking away into the ground, Mr Gusher said: "It is not our job to go round mending pipes. It is our job to take wheelbarrows of money down to the bank and place it in our accounts."

Olympic Stadium For St Cakes

by Our Lottery Staff
Anthea Turnoff

THE latest beneficiary of the National Lottery is the £40,000-per-term Midlands public school St Cakes.

The Lottery Good Cause Committee (Mrs Bottomley prop.) is to give £20 million to the top private school to build an Olympic-style stadium capable of holding 100,000 spectators and being flooded to stage re-enactments of the Battle of Trafalgar.

Eton Betting Song

Said the headmaster Mr R. Kipling: "This is exceedingly good news for Cakes. But also of course for our surrounding community.

"It is quite untrue to suggest that there is anything elitist about this grant made by the Camelot committee, and the fact that the Chairman, Sir Roderick Scratchcard, is an Old Cakonian and a personal friend is irrelevant.

"We shall be making our Olympic facilities available to residents of the nearby village of Slough on alternate Tuesday nights during the summer holidays, unless the school premises are holding corporate events, such as the very successful recent BBC Management Workshop Weekend, arranged with our old friend Sir Marmalade Gusset (OC)."

Floreat Cakensis

As controversy grew over the so-called "Cakegate" affair, a local Labour MP Keith Nerd said: "It's money for toffs — just like Covent Garden.

"Why can't the money go to ordinary working people, like the unemployed?"

Mr Kipling is 71.

LATE NEWS

"St Cake's 'A' Level Results Best Ever" says Head

Those results in full

Media Studies

Grade A	99%
Grade B	1%

Counselling Studies

Grade A	102%
Other Grades	0%

Customer Care Studies

Grade A	110%

Photocopying

Grade A	225%

Maths, Physics, History, French, Latin, Greek etc.
No candidates offered.

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber

GOOD MORNING.... SPECIAL DELIVERY FOR CLAUDIA SCHIFFER!
YAWN— THAT'S ME!
SURPRISE!!!
POP!
DAVID!
HELLO DARLING. IT'S JUST A LITTLE TRICK I'M WORKING ON.....
GETTING YOU OUT OF BED WITHOUT HAVING TO PAY YOU TEN GRAND!
BASTARD!
Kerber

POETRY CORNER

Haiku In Commemoration Of The Japanese Apology

You are sorry.
Or are
You?

反省

Ee Jai Thribbohito (71)

DIARY

Every true American will remember the magical moment in that great movie "True Grit". The sun is going down on the all-American sky. John Wayne mounts his horse, a high-caliber shotgun in each hand. A hundred yards away, the bad guys act likewise. Wayne's horse goes into a trot, then a canter. Then a gallop. Like the old soldier he is, Wayne gets his enemies in his sights. And then he blasts the vermin dead.

To this day, I remember watching that scene for the fifth time. Future world historians will see the moment as pivotal in the understanding of my philosophy. Suddenly — as if from Heaven — I came to the realisation that this was the answer to teenage pregnancies. Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying you necessarily shoot the girls stone dead. But every true American knows in his heart that a small wound to the shoulders plus maybe a deepish graze to the head would teach them a lesson they wouldn't forget.

NEWT GINGRICH

Imagine it. An elderly lady, revered by her community, is brutally raped and gunned down by a man. I'm not saying he's a negro — I fight for the rights of each and every American, regardless of color, so long as he aspires to our decent white American way of life. But let's say, for argument's sake, that he's a guy whose skin just happens to be black. And at the elderly lady's funeral, her entire family, including her beloved grandchildren Chuck and Candy and their beautiful mom, Suzie, are ruthlessly gunned down by a lone psycho.

Two days later, a mob dances on their mass grave. Doesn't it make you angry? Then the pastor who begs them to stop is himself brutally murdered with a handgun, and so are over a hundred mourners. Sick.

And you know what happens? At their trial, the murderers — brutal and merciless psychos, with no feeling for man, woman nor beast — are awarded a million dollars compensation by the federal judge for the blood-stains that have gotten soaked into their nice clean clothes! And then, sure enough, first psychopath is elected Mayor on the Democratic ticket.

We are building a sick society. Maybe this actual incident hasn't yet happened. Or at least not yet. But let no one try to kid you it won't ever happen. And all because of a calculated effort by the liberal elite to destroy the foundation of American values by calling for tighter gun control. If only that elderly lady, revered by her community, had been wielding a Magnum 45 semi-automatic repeater handgun at the time, none of this would ever have happened.

Liberals are part of an organised conspiracy to defraud regular Americans by making them associate guns with violence. There's only one word for that. Baloney. No gun ever killed anyone. It's the person holding the gun who kills. And if he's just been shot stone dead by a loveable old gran guided by her Creator, then that to me makes a happy day in Georgia.

There are many ways the liberal elite with its stranglehold on our media tries to destroy the man of destiny, chosen by his Creator to reinvigorate America. And the simplest weapon of all is the sex smear. You may have read recently of a woman who alleges she regularly engaged with me in oral sex. Now, to be frank, I'm not sure I know what oral sex actually is. Sure, I talk a lot, who doesn't? Sure, I'm a member of the male sex, and proud of it. But is this a crime? You want to know what actually happened? The woman in question had been eating a meal, she found she'd something caught in her throat, she was in desperate need of a long instrument, liberal welfare as usual couldn't provide any such thing, so Newtie offers her one of his own. Is caring now a crime? Under this Clinton administration, has compassion really become a Federal offence? Faced with this poor woman's plight, I believe every true American would have acted as I did. In the words of William Shakespeare, we must make America a nation fit for a hero. And, if our Creator desires it, then have no doubt; that hero will be me. We live in a great country, a bold and beautiful country. When I was helping out that poor lady all that time ago, I remember thinking that yes, this truly is the romance of America.

The future lies ahead of us. Ahead of us lies the future. Future lies are ahead of us. And yes, I want to be there when the future arrives, be it yesterday or today. Her is my three-point plan for the future, yours and mine, but not theirs:

Step One: Reasserting the Futurity of the Future

Let's not kid ourselves that the future lies in the past. Let's embrace it as something that will happen soon, if we let it. And it's your future as well as mine. Let's all do something to make it come about.

Step Two: We are a Unique Civilisation

Dreaming of creating a better future and then making it come true — these are the hallmarks of Americans. Ray Kroc was just one man who possessed the can-do spirit of America. In 1954, he set up his first burger bar. It was called McDonalds. That very first Big Mac was created from blood and sweat and muscle and guts. Placed between two sesame buns. And that's the way people liked them. Now half a million cows of all nations visit Heaven every day in pursuit of Ray Kroc's great dream. The Big Mac. Tupperware. The Lucy Show. The Death Penalty. And now Newtie. We are a unique civilisation. Let's keep it that way.

Step Three: Replacing the Welfare State with an Opportunity Society

Dr Martin Luther King was correct in predicting that by the end of the millennium the poor would skyrocket. In his down-to-earth book *Thoughts From The Planet Zygo*, the distinguished philosopher and scientist Lou Nattick demonstrates just how that skyrocket can be constructed, with room for up to twenty thousand welfare victims per flight. This means that after just 1000 days, we would have eradicated poverty from this nation we love. Then we will have created an opportunity society through outsourcing the fiber optic cellular O-Span Internet in which there are no taxes, consequently no fatal illnesses, and problem people are a thing of the past.

The dream is ours. By turning to Newt, we have the opportunity to cease it with both hands.

Celeb

LIGGER

AND THIS IS PIXIE FROU-FROU'S BIRTHDAY PARTY LAST MONTH. SHE'S TWELVE NOW AND ALL GROWN UP.
MY WORD.
BLIP
VIDEO
YES SHE'S GETTING QUITE THE YOUNG LADY NOW, LOOK AT HER. WE HAD A NICE LITTLE CELEBRATION...
YEAH.
DID YOU GIVE HER THE BUMPS?
NO NO... 'COURSE NOT.
YOU MEAN THEY'RE NATURAL? GOOD HEAVENS.
YUP. NO SILICONE IMPLANTS BEFORE SHE'S FOURTEEN. I'M QUITE STRICT ABOUT THAT.

Literary Review

Licked into shape

ARTS AND CULTURES: The History of the Fifty Years of the Arts Council of Great Britain
Andrew Sinclair
(Sinclair-Stevenson, £20)

ARSE-LICKING is no job for an amateur. You think anyone can do it, if pushed? Well, maybe. But to do it really well, though — to do it at the highest level — that's a job for a pro.

Happily Andrew Sinclair, or rather Dr Andrew Sinclair FRSL, as he signs himself here, *is* a pro. That's why the writing of this book amounts to nothing more than the turning of a trick, with Sinclair as the tart and the Arts Council as the john.

If you investigate the small print of the Arts Council's 46th annual report and accounts for the year 1990-91, you will find an interesting fact lurking in the section describing the literature department's disbursements. Under the vague heading of "Schedule 1 to the accounts" is a category mysteriously titled "Unsolicited Approaches", presumably a dignified term for a slush fund.

Four items appear: £20,000 to the Commonwealth Institute; £1,500 to Outposts Poetry Quarterly; and £2,500 to Reading University — predictable enough Arts Council spillages. The fourth item, however, is a little more surprising: "Andrew Sinclair, £60,000." It's quite a lot of money, isn't it, even for the arse-licking of your life? You could probably still get quite a good going over from the probably much more talented Divine Brown for less.

It was nowhere stated in this annual report that this money was for Sinclair to write a (favourable) history of the Arts Council. However, on being asked by a journalist who happened to notice this peculiar deployment of public funds, the literature department announced that it was a subsidy for "research" on this book, possibly on the basis that the finished product would itself be a valuable contribution to English literature.

Nice work if you can get it, nothing to be ashamed of, what? And why should Sinclair of all people be ashamed of it? After all, he has grovellingly sung the praises of rich patrons often enough in the past. Sometime ago he published a pamphlet, sponsored by WH Smith, under the explicit title *Patron Is Not A Dirty Word*. A few years later he dedicated a whole book to this lofty theme. Disappointingly, it was called *The Need To Give: The Patron And The Arts*, rather than *The Pleasure Of Taking*, of which he would seem to have more direct experience.

Yet for all that Sinclair *does* seem to be ashamed. *Arts and Cultures* is to all appearances a normal independent, commercial publication. Nowhere, unless it's in invisible ink, does it say it is sponsored, or quasi-official, or, to put it a little more plainly, prostituted. You think that at least the acknowledgements page

must mention it? Nope. All that Sinclair manages to say there is: "I am deeply indebted to the Chairman and Officers of the Arts Council of Great Britain for permission to quote from their papers and reports, 1946-1994, and to reproduce illustrative material from their archives." Actually, you're just a tiny little bit more deeply indebted than that, aren't you, squire?

In fact any reader who buys this book thinking he or she is buying Sinclair's services, such as they are, will be deceived. They've already been bought by the rest of us, the lucky old taxpayers. So, we're entitled to ask, has the Arts Council had its money's worth, or rather *our* money's worth? Not half! Sinclair lays it on thick.

First we get a ludicrous prologue surveying the whole of history and seeing our very own Arts Council as its finest flower. Why, he says, it was nobbut "a theocratic and embryo Arts Council" which "advised Gilgamesh how to build the Sumerian City of Uruk, also Nebuchadnezzar how to set up the first art museum in the open courts of his palace beside the Hanging Gardens of Babylon". In classical times, the Greek advisers of the great patrons were "the minor arts councils of the day", don't you know? But, really, "if there is a prototype for an arts council in Europe, it must lie in the religious advisers of the Emperor Charlemagne, many of them from Britain". My, it's a grand thing, to be an Arts Councillor! This is just a flattering but fake family history drawn up for the gullible rich.

Then Sinclair plods his way through the history of the wretched body, step by step, all the way back from ENSA through Lord Goodman to Lord Gowrie. His general approach is that it's been a bloody triumph, and every single report, review, appointment and retirement speech has been thrillingly important.

The Arts Council can fairly congratulate itself on its incessant achievements, he tells us. "By 1965, the Arts Council could pat itself on the back with another success, the revival of the theatre in Britain," he says for example. By the time he's reached the end of the story, it has made the country "a global magnet of the performing arts". Yes, he trills in conclusion, "all arts and cultures did better under the sprinklers of national subsidies."

Rather left out of this happy chorus is the present chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain, the more sceptical Gowrie. It was under his predecessor, preposterous Palumbo, that Sinclair received his own refreshing little sprinkling and it is him he still fawns on, despite his weird obsession with the millennium. Of the radical changes in arts funding now being wrought by the lottery fund and the department of national heritage he has nothing to say. The book is therefore already out of date.

Still, it's a useful reminder that sooner or later public subsidy distorts and perverts everything it touches. Or, more than a reminder, this publication itself is proof enough; proof positive. It is, in its own little way, one of the most characteristic products of the whole tawdry system.

FOR SALE
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SNIPCOCK & TWEE
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STAFF MEETING
MINE'S ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEED - THE REST OF YOU CAN START CLEARING YOUR DESKS
STAFF MEETING

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

BLOOM AND BUST

AUTHORS have been dropping out of the Edinburgh book festival like collapsing ninepins. Michael Foot is too ill to appear; Steven Berkoff can't get away from Hollywood (he'll try and make it next week); etcetera.

The biggest event of the entire book festival was to have been a grand debate, also to have been broadcast on the BBC World Service programme *Meridian*, starring such luminaries as Professor Frank Kermode and Dr Germaine Greer taking up the American mandarin Harold Bloom's thesis as to whether there is or isn't a definitive reading list all intelligent types should have read.

The brightest star was to have been Professor Bloom himself, Leopold to his enemies. The tickets had not been going well but the festival people had worked their butts off to sell the 300 seats at a fiver a throw. The day after the last ticket was sold the latest marketing panjandrum at Bloom's British publisher, MacMillan, decided it was a waste of cash to bring the fragile Bloom and entourage of wife and daughters first class from the States and to put them up for three nights at the Caledonian Hotel. Bloom declined to fly steerage and to stay in some B&B establishment in Morningside.

The event would still have taken place had Dr Greer not then taken umbrage and shuffled away from the Charlotte Square tented city. Five hundred angry punters had to be placated, then refunded. The festival is deliberating whether to sue Pan MacMillan for causing it substantial loss of income and even more loss of face by failing to deliver its author.

'McBookworm'

NAIM Attallah-Disgusting has a new dirty book to plug — his own *Timeless Passion* — but the world of letters is more interested in a forthcoming dirty book *about* him.

While the awaited biography promises to reveal secrets from Attallah's murky past, his present is none too chipper. He has just been cruelly humiliated by the *Evening Standard*, which sneered at his stewardship of Asprey's, the Bond Street fancy goods store and then spelt his name wrongly in a subsequent interview.

An indignant Naim rang Steven again and instead of an apology secured an undertaking that the *Standard* would review his new novel instead. Indeed, he has been going to desperate lengths to attract attention to the book. He even went to Norman Balon, foul-mouthed proprietor of the Coach & Horses, and apologised profusely for not inviting Norm to the launch but begged him to attend the book-signing lest no one turned up.

'Bookworm'

NO WATERWORLD

THAMES OVER-REACHES

WHILE the cups of certain water industry executives have been running over thanks to cashed-in share options and inflation-beating pay rises, some customers have seen standpipes arrive in their street along with warnings of more rationing to come.

In the Thames Water area the problem is different: no water shortages yet, but a big loss of £22 million in the last financial year — and a continual loss of 27 percent of water through the company's leaky pipes.

Some of the £22 million financial loss can be explained by Thames's continuing enthusiasm for non-core activities — anything that does not involve providing water to consumers.

One such non-core activity is Thames's ambitious bid to supply water to a suburb of Bangkok in nearby Thailand. Thames spent nearly half a million pounds preparing the bid but faces failure as the newly-elected Thai government wants a Thai firm to have the contract.

Another unfortunate investment was in the US water engineering firm PWT, which cost Thames £30 million. In 1993 Thames had to make a £25 million writedown against PWT, largely against the value of two Egyptian contracts, bought as part of the original deal, which went into litigation. Thames managers are still waiting to see any significant profit from the buy.

Thames's undampened enthusiasm for foreign affairs was seen in a recent advert in the *Sunday Times* for a general manager. The job was based in Turkey — some little way down river from Goring-on-Thames — and the lucky candidate would receive a salary of £100,000 a year.

The worst clanger must be the bid for the 15-year contract to run South Australia's waste water and water operations. Wily Thames entered the race for the £680 million contract with a French partner, Compagnie Generale des Eaux. Australian politicians have since called for a freeze on all contracts with the French in protest at planned nuclear tests in the Pacific.

Still, while the losses pile up and 27 percent of the water leaks into the ground at least Thames's chairman Sir Robert Clarke is muddling along. Since privatisation he has received a 42 percent salary increase.

YORKSHIRE BITTER

DESPITE the row about drought orders, standpipes, hosepipe bans and the leakage of a third of its water through old pipes, it was business as usual at the Yorkshire Water agm in Harrogate.

Despite opposition from small shareholders, a new member was appointed to the board: Colin Cooke, chairman of Triplex Lloyd, a metallurgical company in Keighley. He brings useful experience as his company has just received an enforcement notice over pollution emission levels at its plant.

Meanwhile there is no water restriction — and none anticipated — up the road from Yorkshire in the Northumbrian Water area. The company, based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, has the Kielder reservoir brimful with 44 billion gallons. Why can't it sell some to Yorkshire? Because there is no water grid to carry the water and the water companies are in no hurry to build one because it costs money.

STAPLES CORNERED

BRIAN STAPLES, North West Water md, has made a speech advising train operating companies on the best way to privatisation.

The fool leaked minutes from the meeting show Staples boasted about his own efficient staff cuts at North West Water which left virtually no unionised employees. As for the rail unions, he told the companies, they should "eliminate or emasculate" them as they would never respond or change.

No doubt one North West Water shareholder in particular will be interested in Staples's hardline opinion: Aslef, the train drivers' union.

COSY NOSTRA

IAN BYATT, director-general of the water regulator, has created a cosy world of familiar faces at Ofwat.

Jim Gardner, chairman of Northumbria customer services committee (CSCs are the local branches of Ofwat) and of the Ofwat national customer council, is a close friend of Byatt's from their schooldays.

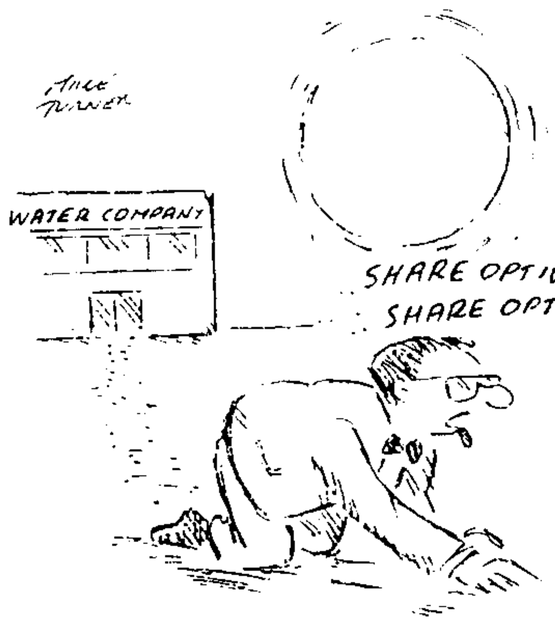
Mrs Elizabeth Monck is chairwoman of the Thames CSC, and married to Nicholas Monck, a former colleague of Byatt's at the treasury. Over at the Welsh CSC, meanwhile, is an old pal of Byatt's from Oxford days: Archdeacon Raymond Roberts. His personal secretary, recently promoted to higher executive officer, is the wife of Roy Wardle, head of Ofwat's customer services committee appointments and performance division.

SEVERN UP

WITH profits of £45.8 million — and a hosepipe ban just instigated — Severn Trent Water shareholders can easily spare a bob or two for the WaterAid charity.

The charity has won Britain's water companies the Stockholm Water prize for bringing water to three million people in the world's poorest countries. But did Severn Trent have to send customers pamphlets asking for WaterAid donations along with their disconnection notices?

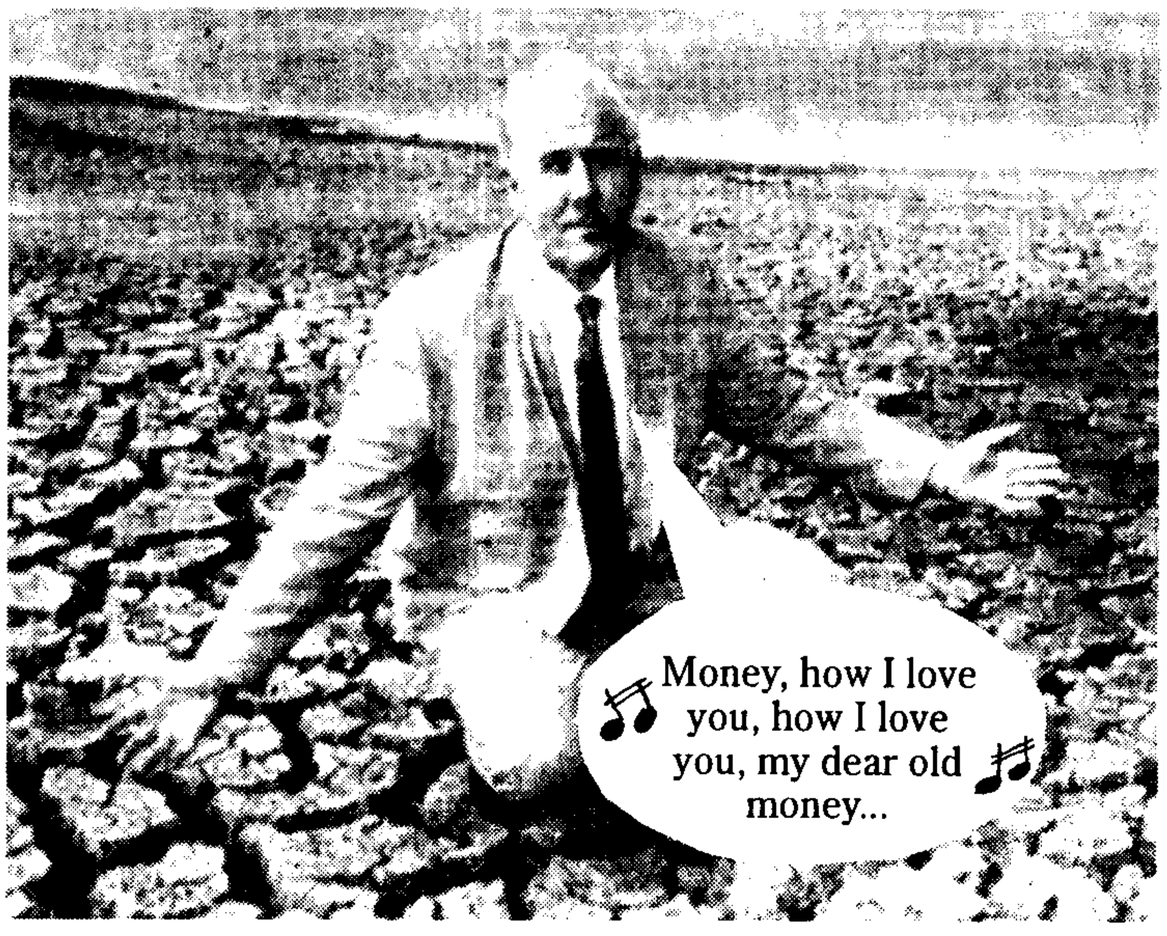
ESSEX MAIN



AT Essex and Suffolk Water, the largest and most profitable of the smaller privatised water-only companies, md Tony Harding's salary rose from £96,000 in 1993/4 to £114,000 in 1994/5.

This 19 percent rise came despite heavy criticism from the drinking water inspectorate whose tests repeatedly found that Essex and Suffolk's water was polluted with sewage. It has been forced to agree to 31 recommendations for a clean-up.

SINGING IN THE NO RAIN



Brian Duckworth, managing director of Severn Trent Water

footnotes

THE KIRBY GRIP

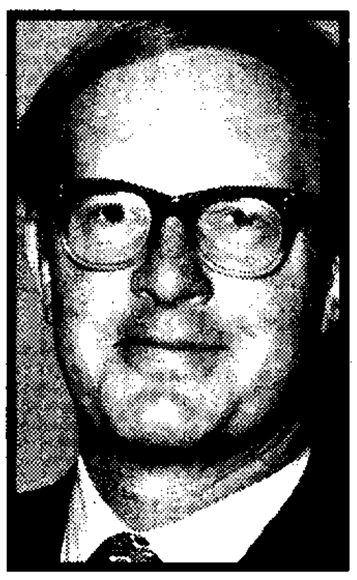
TERRIBLE and swift was the punishment meted out to two ambassadors found guilty of "appalling management" and "complete lack of control" during a £700,000 currency and expenses fraud at the British embassy in the Yemen. Both were asked to retire early.

His excellency Mr Mark Marshall CMG got a lump sum of £66,345, six months' "resettlement leave" worth £23,070 and a further payment for outstanding leave of £14,980. Just to show there were no hard feelings, he also got a "compensation grant" of £23,127.

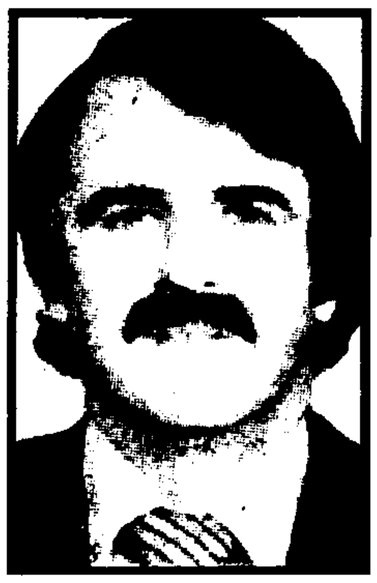
To this sum of £127,523 was added his pension payments, which by October 1997 will come to £93,671. The cost to the foreign office (taxpayer) of the package was only slightly less than it would have been had Marshall worked out his time and retired at 60.

His Excellency Mr Douglas Gordon got a lump sum of £69,662, a scheduled service grant of £10,865, six months' resettlement leave of £23,449 and that old friend the compensation grant worth £8,445. The cost to the taxpayer of his package — £131.017 — was only £1,798 less than it would have been had Mr Gordon worked out his time and retired at 60.

The currency frauds started soon after second secretary Gerald Ryan arrived at the embassy in 1989. He was advised by an ingenious local accountant that there were two rates of exchange for hard currency which could be drawn on the embassy account: the standard rate and a "parallel rate" which was often twice as high. Why not, the accountant suggested, draw the money to pay workers, contractors and the like on the "parallel rate" and pocket the difference? Ryan thought this a brilliant idea



COLES



A very old picture of KIRBY

and worked the system diligently for three years. He also managed to make $50,000 clear profit by negotiating a needlessly expensive five-year lease for the ambassador's residence and devised several more standard expense account fiddles to bring the total fiddled up to £700,000.

How could he get away with it? The alarm in the embassy was raised quite early: between 1989 and 1994 there were no fewer than 17 expensive visits to the embassy by internal audit, migration, visa department and overseas estates department FO inspectors. All of them thought the management was sloppy and accounts leaky. They proposed no fewer than 150 different ways to improve matters, only very few of which were ever put into effect. Finally, early in 1994, Ryan was arrested and brought back to England where he was suspended on full pay. He admitted his fraud to the police and was warned he might be prosecuted. On Christmas Eve last year he committed suicide.

A huge sigh of relief went up at the FO. The relief turned to dismay, however, when the Commons public accounts committee (PAC) decided to look into the matter. The FO agreed to send along its very top man, permanent under-secretary Sir John Coles KCMG. The hearing was set down for 20 March, but then a funny thing happened. On 16 March the foreign office sent a confidential letter to the committee. "We are," intoned the letter, "considering disciplinary action against a number of Diplomatic Service officers who formerly served in Sana'a (capital of the Yemen)." The problem, it went on, was that Sir John Coles was also the accounting officer who would have to decide any penalties resulting from disciplinary proceedings.

"It would be difficult for any official to talk in detail about disciplinary cases in public as this might prejudice the department's position if it came to an industrial tribunal." Moreover, the accounting officer could not delegate his role to anyone else. There was nothing for it: any involvement in the fraud or the mismanagement of any other serving official couldn't be discussed at the Commons committee.

The MPs were all very cross and Sir John Coles apologised. But he got his way and somehow the MPs managed to cross-examine him without mentioning anyone except the dead man Ryan, the ingenious accountant in Yemen who had done a runner, and the two retired ambassadors.

For one awkward moment, however, the cover-up threatened to come apart. Labour MP Mike Watson reminded Sir John that "some weaknesses identified as long ago as autumn 1991 had still not been corrected despite contrary assurances from the then head and deputy head of mission. So lies were told to the people that the foreign and commonwealth office were sending out."

Sir John could only reply: "It was appalling management."

But who was the deputy head of mission, the number two at the embassy during this time? He was Gordon Kirby, who will be well known to loyal and ancient *Eye* readers.

Kirby was the consul in the British embassy in Jeddah when a British nurse, Helen Smith, was found battered, raped and dead at the bottom of a block of flats in the city. Kirby appeared many times in the *Eye*'s long coverage of that story and on one occasion successfully sued the *Eye* for so much money that a special Kirbyballs fund had to be set up.

The foreign office confirmed that Mr Kirby is now working in an unidentified job at the FO in London. "I'm not able to comment on the possibility of disciplinary action being brought against any officers over the Yemen business," said a spokesman.

BAe's MONOPOLY BOARDROOM

■ WILL the government continue the cosy monopoly it has fostered with its favourite arms company, British Aerospace?

One of the first decisions of Michael Portillo, the new defence secretary, will be whether to extend yet again an agreement made with BAe in 1988.

It concerns Royal Ordnance, Britain's biggest manufacturer of ammunition, which was under the complete control of the ministry of defence until 1987 when it was privatised to "increase competition" in the arms industry. Immediately the government increased that competition by knocking down Royal Ordnance at a bargain basement price to British Aerospace, which was then guaranteed government contracts for 80 per cent of all the ammunition and explosives previously made by Royal Ordnance.

The details of this crude monopoly deal, later known as the EPREP agreement, were kept entirely secret even from other companies in the business. The government's excuse was that Royal Ordnance, under its new ownership, needed time to become competitive and should be protected by a virtual monopoly for a short period. This period ended in 1993 — and the government coolly renewed it for two more years.

Now Portillo and the directors of BAe very much hope the contract can be secretly renewed again — without any awkward questions being asked, of course.

■ The photograph accompanying the story on prison security in the last issue was incorrectly captioned. It showed Prince Charles with David Morley, the Army Air Corps' chief flying instructor, and not with General Sir John Learmont, as stated. Sorry.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

SO, once again the Department of Timidity and Inaction is off down the yellow brick road, seeking to resolve another of the remarkable coincidences which dominate the Archer-Anglia affair.

All those characters who speak (but *never* about Anglia Television at a time when the takeover bid from MAI is on its way) and then buy Anglia shares (but never with any inside information, relying only on what they read in the newspapers).

But will the DTI investigators get any further this year with Lord Archer's political pal and stockbroker Karen Morgan Thomas than they did last year with the great storyteller's Kurdish chum Broosk Saib? Not if everyone sticks to their story. Which of course they will because it is manifestly the truth.

Despite this obstacle the DTI seems unusually determined to go down the same road again, even though it turned into a dead end last time. Why? One reason may be that the circumstantial evidence of insider trading in Anglia shares is impossible to ignore if equally impossible to prove. Another is the political one: former president of the board of trade

Morgan Thomas: Ring 'n' Buy

Michael Heseltine, who ordered the latest probe in May, may want to prove to Archer's pals in the party (such as his deputy John Major) that he was right to mount the initial investigation and later not to deny its existence. The reason for Hezza's suspicions are not hard to understand.

Consider these facts. At the beginning of December 1993, before MAI made its bid approach, Anglia shares were 378p. By the end of that month the price had reached 428p. In between, on 16 December, MAI made an approach suggesting a possible bid.

On 20 December, Tory party worker Morgan Thomas telephoned Archer, whose fragrant wife was an Anglia director, "to thank him for a present of a book". She admits speaking to the great storyteller again "in January" to enquire about "the outcome of his visit to Kurdistan".

On or soon after 31 December all Anglia directors were informed of the MAI approach and summoned to a board meeting on 5 January to decide the response. At 08.49 on 4 January, the first dealing day after the Christmas-New Year holiday, Morgan Thomas bought 10,000 Anglia shares through her firm James Capel at 431p.

The next day the Anglia directors agreed that negotiations with MAI should continue. By the end of that week Anglia shares were 472p. Turnover in the shares rose each day. At a second board meeting on 12 January the bid was agreed in principle, subject to obtaining a higher price. That day, Morgan Thomas called Archer again. The next day Archer purchased 25,000 Anglia shares in the name of Saib — the price was then 485p. Archer repeated that order on 14 January.

On 18 January MAI announced its agreed 653p a share bid. Three days later Morgan Thomas sold her shares, netting a profit of £22,000. Archer had already sold Saib's shares, making a profit for his little friend of almost £80,000.

Now as we and the DTI all know and accept, Mary denies ever telling Jeffrey about the MAI bid; Jeffrey denies ever knowing about the MAI bid and so could not have told anyone — especially not Broosk and Karen; and Karen says she is "absolutely certain" no reference was made to Anglia during their conversations and she denies any involvement in insider dealing.

So there you have it and there it is. Except that it then emerged that there were more telephone calls between Archer and Morgan Thomas beyond the two during the period from 16 December (the day MAI made its first move) and 21 January (the day she sold her shares) — the focus of the new DTI inquiry.

Four days after she sold Morgan Thomas called Archer once more. But perhaps most intriguing of all, on 8 July 1994 he called her. By yet another of those remarkable coincidences, that was the day that the story about the original DTI investigation into Anglia was all over the front page of the *Times*. This was a call Morgan Thomas returned. But then who wouldn't return a call from such a famous literary and political figure.

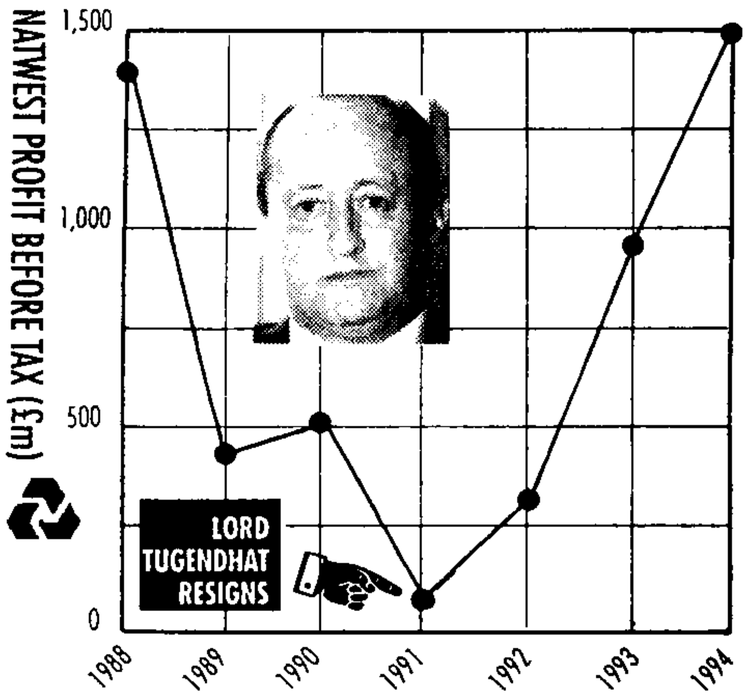
It is an undoubted fact that there was at least one and possibly more "leaks" concerning the MAI bid. "Leaks" can come from either side, but the timing of most of the activity seems to reflect uncannily what was happening in the Anglia boardroom. Turnover more than doubled on 7 January, the day after the Anglia directors agreed to bid talks, with more than 200,000 shares bought and sold as the price jumped from 455p to 472p.

Turnover quadrupled to more than 400,000 shares on 13 January, the day after Anglia agreed to be taken over.

For reasons best known to the DTI and the Stock Exchange, Morgan Thomas was not questioned last year despite the fact that her deal had raised eyebrows at the time within James Capel which she left last November — an unrelated development. Indeed, soon after news of the Archer investigation surfaced, her name, along with that of another individual said to be connected to Archer, were mentioned as having made extremely well timed purchases of Anglia shares. Presumably the DTI did not know and the Stock Exchange did not ask whether Morgan Thomas knew Archer or anyone close to Anglia or MAI.

No doubt the inspectors will rectify that mistake second time around. They might also question her former colleagues at the Capel offshoot Javelin, who seemed to have been more than a little concerned at her good fortune. Former Javelin managing director Nigel Weller told the *Mail on Sunday* last February that he had contacted the DTI but was not formally interviewed. He also claimed that Morgan Thomas told him after buying the

British Management Part 24.
LORD (CHRISTOPHER) TUGENDHAT. Chairman Abbey National. Director BOC Group and Eurotunnel plc. Former Vice-President European Commission and MP for City of London and Westminster. Director National Westminster Bank until 1991.



NatWest Pre-Tax Profit			
1988	£1,407m	1991	£134m
1989	£404m	1992	£367m
1990	£504m	1993	£989m
		1994	£1,592m

Anglia shares: "I do not expect these shares to be held for long." A perfectly innocent remark from someone Weller described as looking "like a cat with the cream" the day she bought the shares and who also asked whether her call was taped. It was not as she was not a dealer.

It was three months after that revelation and the subsequent disclosure in March by the *Sunday Mirror* of the telephone calls that the DTI reopened its investigation. What was it doing in the meantime? Perhaps reexamining all those Anglia share deals and who did them.

For the removal of malicious doubts the DTI (which can compel witnesses and records) will perhaps consider calling not only for any tapes of calls taken by the dealers through whom Morgan Thomas dealt but also for Morgan Thomas's own telephone records both in the office and at home to see whom she may have called after speaking to the great storyteller. After all, suggest the ill-informed, might not a good tip be a good way to ensure more business from Javelin's investment manager clients? Any investigation will doubtless prove that Morgan Thomas had no inside information, could not therefore impart any to others and that her name should be removed from any widening inquiry into the possible operation of one of the insider dealing networks during the run up to the Anglia bid.

'Slicker'

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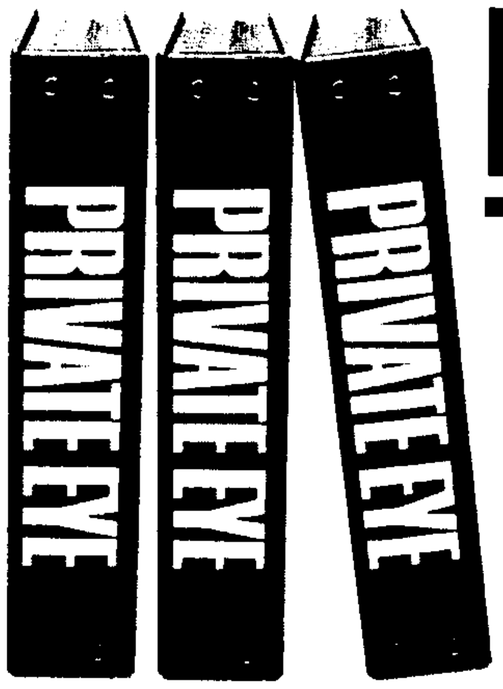

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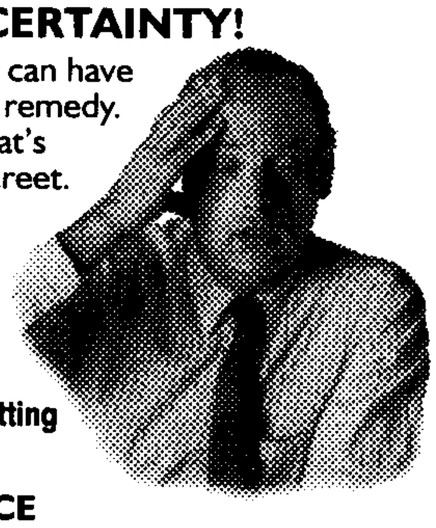

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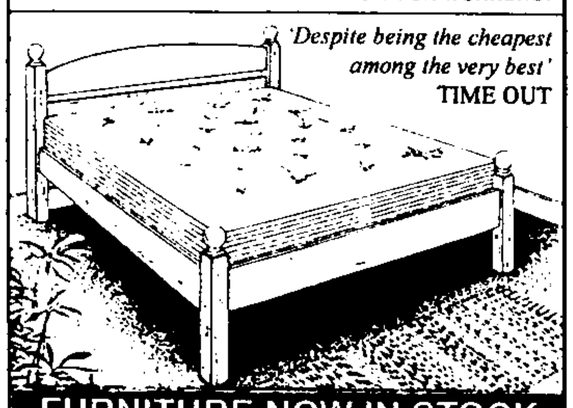

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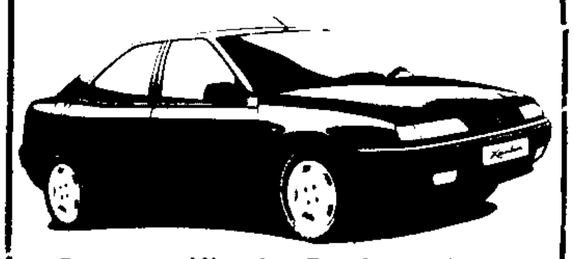

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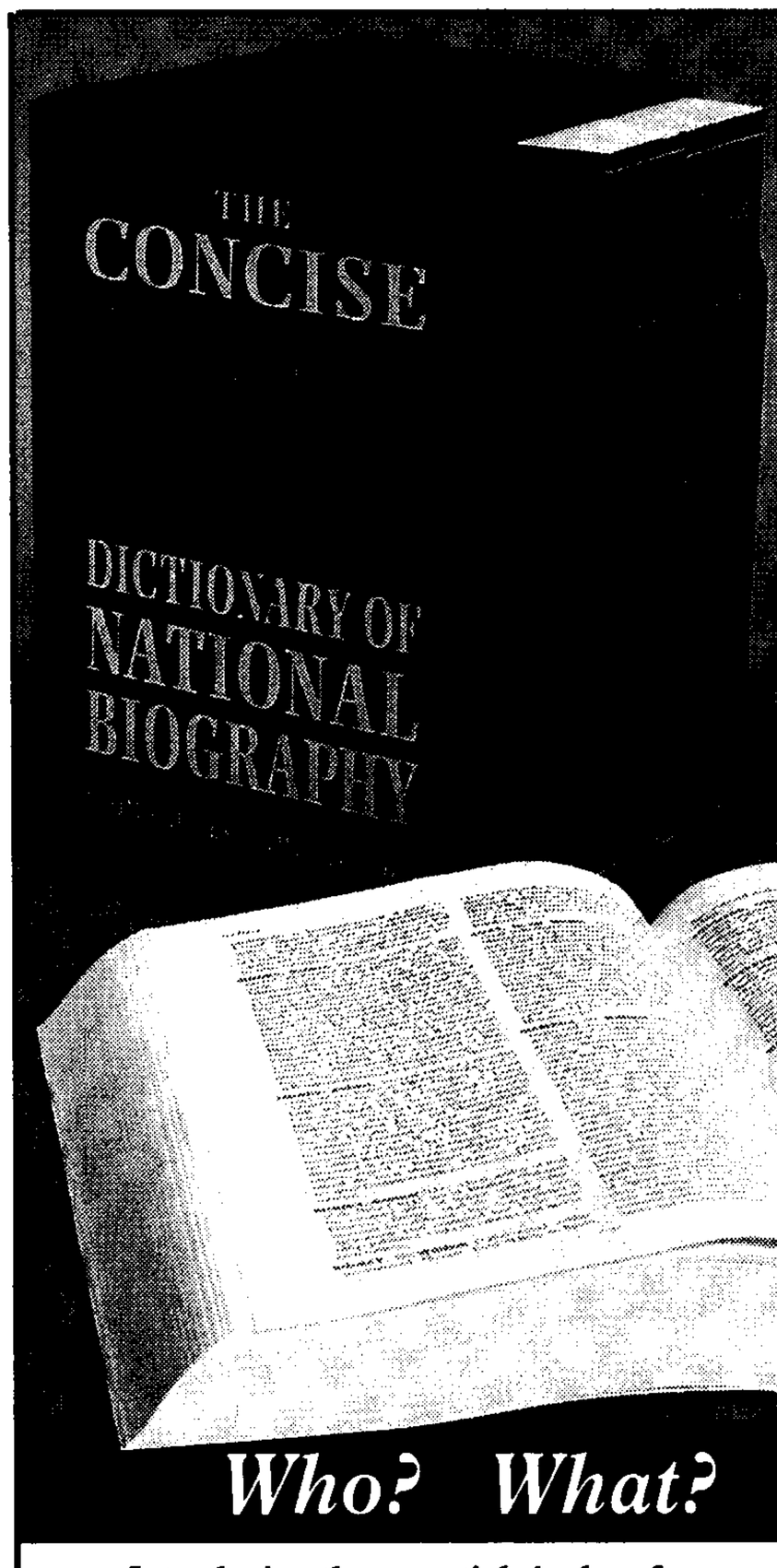

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